

THE FORTNIGHTLY

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A CERTAIN MODERATION

BY J. A. SPENDER

TO commend moderation in these days is to write oneself down an incurable antique. Youth has no use for moderation ; it is all or nothing for our advanced young men. Not for them the golden mean so foolishly belauded by the Greeks. *Mediocritas* is mediocrity, and that is all there is to it.

There is a certain confusion here between thought and action. The thinker may, indeed must, go the whole way with his thought ; he can shock or scare, wander at large in the free world of his imagination, and be hailed as seer and prophet. Now and again "the live coal behind the thought bursts into flame" and "the war of tongue and pen learns with what deadly import it was fraught." Or it suddenly becomes dynamite and blasts away obstructions that have defeated the pick and shovel of the patient worker. But these have been very rare incidents in the history of the world. As a rule the minor prophets, who are the great majority, can go all lengths and do no more than provide a benevolent corrective to conventional thought. If they are in advance of their times, that is their *métier*.

But these, being of a literary disposition, generally keep within their territory—the territory in which opposition can be removed with a wave of the pen and the perfect state inaugurated with a blare of assenting trumpets. Thus conducted, the criticism of practical politics from the point of view of the higher thought is an excellent thing, and the more we have of it the better. But if the higher thinker descends into the arena and puts a veto on the give and take, the compromises, the adjustments to opposing facts, the consideration for minorities, which must be practised by politicians who desire peaceful government,

he very soon becomes a public nuisance. All my life I have delighted in the brilliant raillery which Shaw and Wells have brought to bear on practical politics, while feeling warmly grateful to them for keeping out of the actual business of governing or trying to govern the country. Their relations with me and the likes of me who are engaged in the humdrum business of practical politics are just what they ought to be. They think me a very dull dog ; I am grateful to them for any crumbs that fall from their table which I can use in my plain cookery. The last thing I desire is to moderate their thoughts, but I have to remember that there is a difference between the things which they can say and I can say. Shaw can say that Mrs. Simpson is a suitable match for King Edward and be thought very bright and clever, but if I say it, who am supposed to know something about the practical conditions of the constitutional monarchy, I shall be thought rather absurd.

I

If anything has been brought home to the watcher on the political scene since the beginning of the century, it is that a certain moderation in the sphere of practical politics is the condition of keeping liberty and democracy alive. Parliament, through which alone democracy functions, is the instrument of suasion and reason. It rests ultimately on the willingness of minorities to submit for the term of the Parliament while they endeavour to persuade the electors to return them to power in the next Parliament. It is, and must be, persuasion all the way ; the moment a party dreams of using force against its opponents it throws a challenge to the entire system. We learnt that earlier than most people over the Ulster business in 1913 and 1914, when what would now be called a Fascist movement all but landed us in civil war. That experience so burnt into the memory of the British people that it has, I believe, greatly helped to save them from toying with any similar experiments in the years after the War. It was an inoculation which has so far rendered them comparatively immune from Fascism, Nazism and Sovietism.

We learnt also in those years that blind reliance on the sovereignty of Parliament would not save us if we passed the

boundary between the things that can and the things that cannot be settled by argument and reason. To keep within this boundary is undoubtedly a delicate and difficult art, but it is the whole art of parliamentary government, and those who fail in it pass rapidly to dictatorship, however much they may profess to respect liberty. There are certain spheres in which the parliamentary writ will not run. It is generally powerless against raging nationalist passions and deeply felt religious convictions ; it cannot make revolutionary upheavals in the customary life of family and property ; the inevitability of gradualness is its first law. At each step minorities have to be persuaded to submit and wait. If the state of Denmark has become too rotten, or its controversies are too fierce for this treatment, it will not be mended by Parliament ; it will fall into the hands of absolutists and terrorists who will extinguish its liberties.

II

At the back of all democratic theory is one fundamental assumption—that government is an art and not a science, an art of infinite variety and fallibility going forward by trial and error to conclusions which are never concluded and can only be dimly apprehended by the living generation. If we depart from this and begin to think of government as a science, of which the laws have been discovered by experts or revealed to prophets—a science directed to the building of a society of which they have the perfect plan—we have turned our faces away from democracy and are on the high road to dictatorship. If there is such a science and its laws have been discovered, it is absurd that they should be debated by inexpert parliamentarians. If there is such a society, it is criminal to permit it to be thwarted by a selfish or ignorant minority. The Stalins, Hitlers and Mussolinis who are in possession of this science do not argue with us, they tell us, and necessarily and rightly from their point of view. Dissent from them is not a difference of opinion : it is heresy, wickedness, malevolence, which must be stamped out.

I frankly own to a strong prejudice against men of science who bring ideas from their laboratories into politics. They take a cool interest in experiments on humanity which I think

horrible. Their ideas are those of theologians turned upside down ; they are as certain that they hold the keys to the terrestrial heaven or hell fore-ordained for humanity as the Church was that it controlled the gates of the celestial heaven or hell. This certitude about the uncertain and the unknowable has the same effect in both spheres. The modern dictators behave exactly like the medieval Popes, employing their secret police, as the Church did the Holy Inquisition, to scent out heretics and deliver them over to the scaffold and the stake. I have taken some pains in recent years to follow the disputes between different schools of revolutionaries, and have been struck by the atmosphere of medieval ecclesiasticism which pervades them. Each is persuaded that something called the truth has been revealed exclusively to itself ; none of them can bear that the shade of a shadow of doubt should be cast on their interpretations ; they are as merciless to those who stray an inch from the path, which they think to be the one and only right one, as to the heathen who dwell in the outer darkness of capitalism. Stalin treats the Trotskyists as Calvin treated Servetus. The claim to infallibility is even a little more drastic in the political than in the ecclesiastical sphere, since the infallible Church could afford to let you go your own way when you had made submission to it, whereas the infallible dictator claims your allegiance in the whole of your activities.

History is full of warning that there is no ferocity comparable to that of the dogmatist let loose upon his fellow beings. He kills without scruple and seems to revel in practising what other people call " atrocities " upon those who oppose him. The most hard-bitten militarist would shrink in war from the wholesale slaughter which the Bolshevik inflicts upon the kulaks in his determination to " collectivize " them, or which marks the progress of Fascist, anarchist, and syndicalist in their conflicts in Spain. The most violent of professional criminals would think himself disgraced if he were convicted of the disgusting Sadism which the German race-theorist practises upon the Jews. There is nothing in the world of military conflict to compare with the remorseless passions of the intellect and the tigerish zeal with which it will both inflict and court death when on the war-path.

III

The idea of politics as a science and the corresponding belief that human life can be laid out with the exactitude and precision of engineers and quantity-surveyors planning a railway or a reservoir, find their most benevolent expression in the Webbs' book on Soviet Russia, and it is interesting to see where they lead. Where, asked the Webbs of their Russian friends, may freedom of discussion be permitted in a State organized on this assumption? The answer was, not at all among the "mass of unthinking men," and only up to a certain point among "intellectual colleagues and equals." These may debate among themselves and even be allowed to express their opinions in the form of "proceedings" or "transactions" of a learned society, provided they are not circulated to the vulgar or expressed in language which the vulgar will understand. But when once a decision is arrived at, even this discussion must cease.

It is held that the success of the enterprise will be jeopardized, and may easily be brought to naught, if all those concerned in the work from the manual labourers and the skilled mechanics, the foremen and the assistant managers, up to the highest technicians and the director himself, do not wholeheartedly co-operate with complete assurance and entire devotion in the execution of the particular plan that has been decided upon. Whilst the work is in progress, any public expression of doubt, or even of fear that the plan will not be successful, is an act of disloyalty, and even of treachery, because of its possible effect on the wills and on the efforts of the rest of the staff. A grumbling sceptic or public "grouser," however able and conscientious he may be, may by his creation of a "defeatist" atmosphere, actually bring about the fulfilment of his own prophecies of failure. . . . In any corporate action, a loyal unity of thought is so important that, if anything is to be achieved, public discussion must be suspended between the promulgation of the decision and the accomplishment of the task.—(*Soviet Communism*, II, 1038-9.)

So exactly did the infallible Church proceed in promulgating its doctrines. The dogmatic experts assembled in Ecumenical Council might speak freely among themselves up to the point when the decision was taken, but after that the dissentient must submit, or ever after be silent. No shadow of doubt must be thrown upon infallibility lest the multitude should be shaken in the faith. The analogy is curiously exact even on small points. The "transactions" of the experts in the political community are to be circulated only to the few, and to be in scientific language

which the vulgar will not understand. Latin served the same purpose in the ecclesiastical community.

But in neither the one sphere nor the other was this, or could it be, the end of the matter. The dissentients, being wilful men, were perhaps not silent, or if they were, the ruling infallible feared that they might not be. He had them followed up with his spies and informers, and presently had evidence that they were conspiring against him and his Church or State. Then he "purged" them, or brought them to trial in his own court according to his own rules, and presently had them making abject confessions on which he shot them or sent them to the stake. These are mediæval memories in the case of the Church, but they are modern instances in the case of the totalitarian States. In pursuance of the method described by the Webbs—the method which regards criticism or opposition as "defeatism"—the Communist experts have slaughtered each other so ruthlessly in Russia that very few of the Old Guard survive. In Germany the would-be critic walks in memory of the purge of June 30th, 1934, and in Italy of other red-letter days.

IV

Every country, it has been said, deserves the Government that it has, and it may be that the subjects of the totalitarian States have both deserved and will profit by the discipline imposed on them by their dictators. History will judge. But let us in the meantime be clear that if any party believes government to be a science of which it possesses the secret it is set on the road which these countries have followed. On that hypothesis opposition is treason, and the despotism of experts is the scientific way of life to which we must submit in mind, body, and estate. Plato may be quoted for that idea, but he presumed the existence of a highly trained and deeply bred caste of supermen, whose superiority would be so evident to their fellow-beings that the latter would gladly give over to them the difficult business of government, and remain cheerfully within the stations and pursue the occupations to which they were born and bred. And Plato, in the end, said that this pattern was more likely to be laid up in heaven than realized upon earth. Upon earth it leads to obscurantism and terrorism; the obscurantism which forbids

thinking to the mass of men and women ; the terrorism which compels their submission to a few self-appointed rulers. It means also in practice that the mass, being precluded from thinking, must be kept in a perpetual state of ferment by propaganda, which more and more tends to take blatant and militarist forms.

In this way millions of young people have been swept off their feet in Russia, Germany, and Italy. It is difficult to believe that this phase can last. A few nations seem to take a mystical pleasure in bowing low before monarch or dictator, but for the majority of reasonably educated people, this is a passing phase of disillusion or despondency. It may be great arrogance to say so, but I cannot think of myself making the submissions required by the dictators without a total loss of self-respect. Is it possible that those crowds photographed with outstretched arms and rapt faces as they listen to Hitler or Mussolini could be composed of Englishmen ? Could the average kindly, tolerant English yield to this intoxication ? Can you see them shouting with the Moscow crowd when Stalin puts his enemies against the wall, returning thanks for Hitler's " purge," joining in the Jew-hunt, taking their daily dope from the censored press, reduced to whispers when politics are mentioned, picking their way between the traps laid by spies and informers, disbanding their trade unions, accepting any wages or conditions that authority prescribes for them and going obediently to labour camps, if it so determines ?

I like to think it impossible, and I do not believe that either Fascism or Communism would take exactly these forms if it got established in England, but Englishmen, too, need to be on their guard against the fanaticism which has ruined politics and extinguished freedom in so many countries. If eternal vigilance is, as Burke said, the price of liberty, a certain moderation is its essential condition. Parliamentarians must equally forswear revolution and counter-revolution and be content with the changes that can be grafted on to the existing parent stems. Those spread over a period of time may be so radical as completely to alter the character of the tree and its fruit, but those who want a new tree by the middle of next week must not talk about liberty or democracy or pretend to be Parliamentarians. They must be ready to stamp out opposition and kill their opponents.

V

Our advanced thinkers, then, must make up their minds, when they profess their adhesion to liberty and democracy, whether they are ready to conform to the rules by which alone liberty and democracy can be maintained. The first of these is that political differences must be kept within the boundaries of argument and reason. These are all the time shifting boundaries, but to determine them at any given moment is the test of what may be called the Parliamentary sense. The British people, so far, have seemed to possess this sense to a higher degree than any other. It is part of the general moderation, good humour, and kindness of their national character.

This by no means precludes radical politics, but it does preclude revolutionary politics. Parliament cannot be made the instrument of a revolution. Our left-wing theorists seem unable to understand this simple proposition. They imagine that they have the benefit of both worlds: the world of liberty and democracy and the world in which the class that they favour holds in submission the class or classes that they consider the enemy. This is a delusion. Waged by whatever class, the class-war is fatal to liberty and democracy, and in Western countries is almost certain to end in a Fascist dictatorship. By pursuing radical politics within Parliamentary boundaries the British people have won a standard of life, which, however low it may be in comparison with hopes and ideals, is at least in advance of that enjoyed by any other European country. At the same time they have preserved liberties, the value of which is being daily brought home to them by the practice of the States in which they have been extinguished.

I believe freedom from arbitrary arrest and forced labour, liberty of thought and expression to be ingredients of civilization for which there is no compensation in any material prosperity or mechanical efficiency. It may be that the European dictators are right in thinking that the peoples who accept, or upon whom they have imposed, their rule have not reached the stage at which they can safely be entrusted with this liberty. Herein they throw a challenge to democracy which it must take seriously. A minimum of competence in the art of administration is the first condition of any system whatsoever. Men and women will rush to any shelter if they are threatened with disorder. If

we look to the States in which Parliaments have been superseded by dictatorships we find that, generally speaking, they are States in which democratic Governments have failed to solve elementary problems of law and order. And the reason why they have failed to solve them is, again generally speaking, because the left-wing parties scoff at moderation in dealing with opponents and refuse even to sink their differences with one another in the interests of this minimum of administrative good government.

Socialists, Communists, Syndicalists, Anarchists, wage an incessant war with each other about their theories and continue to wage it in the unsuitable arena of public administration. A very small infusion of Marxian theory in the British Labour Party was sufficient to prevent the co-operation with Liberals and Radicals which was essential to ensure its competence as an alternative Government, and might well have saved it from such catastrophes as befell it in 1924 and 1931. The British in such circumstances save their Parliamentary system by reverting to Conservative or "National Government;" other countries in which Parliamentarism has much shallower roots chase the democrats off the scene and call a dictator to their aid. In both the moral is the same. It is useless to have plans for the regeneration of human society unless the regenerators understand the elementary business of holding it together in a framework of law and order, and will compose their differences sufficiently for that purpose. If liberty and democracy are to be safe, business must be carried on as usual, while the structure is being repaired.

THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE AND DEFENCE

BY H. V. HODSON

THE Prime Minister's announcement that the main subjects for discussion at the Imperial Conference next month would be foreign affairs and defence, constitutional questions, and trade, shipping and air communications, finally scotched the suggestion made by the South African Government, and expressed in the membership of its delegation to London, that the Conference was to be merely an economic one, a successor of the Ottawa meeting. That suggestion, which was no doubt made in the Union for political reasons, found no echo in other Dominions, and was manifestly contrary to common sense. It had been tacitly repudiated by Mr. Eden in his speech on March 9, in which he declared that foreign affairs would be one of the major subjects for discussion at the Conference. The Government, he added, intended to lay the facts as they saw them fully and frankly before the Conference, and to try to reach, in consultation, agreement on lines of policy that would contribute both towards the prosperity of the members of the Commonwealth and towards the peace of the world.

This is as it should be. The central fact about the Imperial Conference of 1937 is that it is the first Imperial Conference for seven years, or five years even if Ottawa is included, and that during that interval the political as well as the economic face of the world has changed almost out of recognition. The primary task of the Conference must be to take account of these changed circumstances and to apply what conclusions must be drawn from them in the field of Commonwealth co-operation.

The most vital change, of course, has been the breakdown of collective security under the League of Nations. This has had serious consequences for the relations of the British Commonwealth countries among themselves. Jealous of their newly-won independence in foreign policy, the Dominions in greater or

less degree have resented and repudiated any allegation that in matters of policy they were still effectively tied to the apron-strings of Whitehall. Their policy, they insisted, was their own, and they would not be bound without their express consent—never given in the key case of Locarno—by the consequences of British policy. This partition of British Commonwealth foreign policy into six separate policies might have had much more serious consequences, both internationally and in the home politics of the Dominions, had there not been an invaluable unifying factor, namely, common adherence to League principles. The value of that factor was clearly seen at the time of the Abyssinian crisis, when it saved the Commonwealth nations from taking different lines of policy according to their different geographical positions and their different direct interests in the war. The Italian victory and the retreat of the League, on the other hand, exposed the underlying dangers of Commonwealth disunity when the League formula no longer served as a decisive index of policy; for two Dominions voted in the minority against the ending of sanctions, and the subsequent views of the British countries on the reform of the League varied from extreme to extreme. New Zealand demanded automatic sanctions and an international force; Canada wanted the coercive elements removed from the League Covenant altogether.

Hence one of the necessary duties of the Imperial Conference is to face these dangers and to discover what community of outlook and action in foreign affairs can be secured in the new circumstances, lest in a crisis the Empire should split. Inevitably the hard core of this question is how far the small Powers of the Commonwealth are prepared to go with the great Power of the Commonwealth, that is to say, the United Kingdom, in commitment abroad; or conversely how far their reluctance to commit themselves compels a certain retraction of the United Kingdom's foreign policy. Mr. Eden's Bradford speech, which has been re-endorsed by Mr. Chamberlain recently, may serve as a starting point for discussion. Are the Dominions prepared, for their part, to render more precise Mr. Eden's non-committal statement of Britain's general obligations to fight for others, by supporting a revived system of world collective security? Apart from the Labour Government in New Zealand, that seems

extremely doubtful. On the other hand, are the Dominions prepared even to put their names to the definite and particular obligations that Mr. Eden cited—the guarantee against unprovoked aggression to France and Belgium, and to Germany if she should come into a revised Western Pact, and the defensive alliances with Egypt and Iraq? Again, the answer seems to be “No.” There are, it is true, large sections of opinion in the Dominions—majorities in some, minorities in others—which appreciate both the essential community of Commonwealth interests and the need for some sort of British intervention in Europe, for the sake of stability and peace, as well as the regional security of Great Britain herself. Yet even such people are reluctant openly and permanently to pledge their countries to warlike obligations of a precise and automatic kind. The Chanak incident was the first warning, and again in 1926 the British Government was compelled to recognize, as it has to recognize still, that one of the risks of United Kingdom foreign policy is necessarily the risk that in a crisis some of her fellow-members will not be prepared to follow her in carrying out her international obligations in Europe or the Near East.

Hence the problem of foreign policy for the Commonwealth must be put in an entirely different form if we are to make any progress. What policy should its member nations pursue in order to minimize the chance of there arising such a dangerous crisis? The practical issue is, not whether the Dominions will follow the United Kingdom into war, for that must wait on the event; but how are wars into which Great Britain may inevitably be drawn to be avoided? The Dominions always regarded the League in this light, as a preventer of world wars, rather than an obligation to go to war to defend others. What are to be the preventive principles today? Isolationism? Liability limited to the West of Europe? Or to the West and the North of Europe, and to the Mediterranean zone? A neutral bloc, from Finland to the Americas? A League of Nations denuded of automatic coercive sanctions and designed to include the Powers now absent? Regional pacts in which the Dominions themselves would directly take part according to their regional interests? Non-intervention in international as well as civil wars? These are some of the possibilities that will have to be

reviewed against the background of *Realpolitik*, which can be expounded only behind closed doors.

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These considerations of foreign policy are themselves the background of problems of Commonwealth defence. Armaments exist to support foreign policy, even if it is a policy only of isolationism and self-defence. Conversely, the character of the foreign policy to be pursued depends on the strength and character of the armed forces available (including the likelihood of having friends and allies), since to run diplomatic risks on a bluff is to court humiliation at the hands of a stronger player or a bolder bluffer. In the relations between defence and foreign policy in the Commonwealth, considered as a group of independent nations, the vital factor is the determination of the Dominions to decide for themselves whether and to what extent they will participate in a war in which fellow-members of the Commonwealth are involved. This rules out from the start all possibility of a unified Commonwealth defence service—land, sea, or air—under a single command. To approach the problem from this direction would be to cause an instant recoil of Dominion opinion, which has been made highly sensitive to the danger of being “dragged into Britain’s wars.” The retort that Britain is ready to run the risk of being dragged into the Dominions’ wars is liable to reduce the argument to a plane on which no practical progress is possible. A dialectical success for ourselves would be no compensation for failure to secure the desired agreement with others.

As a matter of fact, even from the United Kingdom point of view it is not a sensible line of approach. For if, let us say, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand had a joint navy to which each contributed a quota of men and of money for ships and material, it would be reasonable for the oversea partners in it to insist on an equal voice with Great Britain in deciding where, when and how it was to be used, particularly at times of war or imminent danger of war. They might even, with some logic, demand a *liberum veto* on its use. Such a system would paralyse the Navy and to an equal extent paralyse the policy that the Navy existed to uphold. It would be practicable only if it were preceded by the establishment of a combined

executive government for the members of the Commonwealth concerned, which in turn would almost certainly imply a super-Parliament to which the super-Government would be responsible. With all its community of race interests and institutions, the British Commonwealth is no exception to the truth that an international force presupposes an international government.

The principles of imperial defence accepted by the Imperial Conferences of 1923 and 1926 contain no suggestion of a need for unified forces under a single supreme command. The key elements in them are, first, the primary responsibility of each self-governing country of the Commonwealth for its own local defence, and, secondly, the desirability of uniform training and equipment throughout the Commonwealth—the implied purpose being to ensure easy co-operation or unification in the event of a war in which two or more Commonwealth countries might be engaged. For the rest, the “principles” were vague. They endorsed the maintenance of a one-Power naval standard, of a standard of home air strength by Great Britain “sufficient to give adequate protection against air attack by the strongest air force within striking distance of her shores,” and of a chain of naval and air bases and fuelling stations to ensure strategic mobility and the security of communications. The defence resolutions referred particularly to the deep interest of Australia, New Zealand and India in the provision of a naval base at Singapore, “as essential for ensuring the mobility necessary to provide for the security of the territories and trade of the Empire in Eastern waters,” and to “the necessity for the maintenance of safe passage along the great route to the East through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.”

These special references indicate the right approach to the problem of Commonwealth co-operation in defence. We must start from the responsibility of each Dominion and of the United Kingdom for its own local defence. But where does local defence end? The Imperial Conference agreed that Australia, New Zealand and India were deeply interested in the Singapore naval base, not as defending *local* territory and trade in the narrow sense, but as defending “the territories and trade of the Empire in Eastern waters,” which manifestly include the Java, Celebes and Arafura seas, indeed the whole imperial

defensive line that runs roughly along the volcanic fault from Malaya to New Zealand. The resolution was an acknowledgment that in a reasonably broad sense the local defence of Australia, New Zealand and India extended at least as far afield as Singapore—an acknowledgment given practical form by New Zealand through a cash contribution to the cost of the new base.

This enlargement of the idea of local defence applies in other parts of the Commonwealth too. Thus the defence of the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf is in a broad sense part of the local defence of India, Ceylon and East Africa. Again, the national defensive problem of the Union of South Africa does not stop short at the Limpopo; South African statesmen have more than once voiced the notion that it extends over the whole of Southern Africa. The sentiment of solidarity among all the African countries south of the equator is manifestly growing. Indeed, the Union's reactions to the Abyssinian war almost justify the conclusion that aggression anywhere on the African continent, or any action likely to disturb the relations between black and white races, is to be reckoned a matter of immediate vital concern to the South African Union, and as such within the sphere of its national defence, on a wide interpretation of the term.

We can go further than that. The Abyssinian crisis, and the consequent Anglo-Italian tension, revealed the effect of the new state of affairs in the Mediterranean upon South African defence. Even on that occasion an appreciable volume of merchant shipping was diverted round the Cape from the Mediterranean route. It was brought home to South African opinion that a war or threat of war in the Mediterranean involving the security of the great British-defended route to the Far East and Australia via the Suez Canal would instantly make the Cape a strategic key-point of supreme importance. Hence in a secondary sense the Mediterranean itself comes within the scope of national defence for South Africa. If Mr. Baldwin may say that Britain's frontier is on the Rhine, Mr. Pirow may by a similar metaphor say that South Africa's frontier is on the waters of the Mediterranean.

It may perhaps be an exaggeration to project the idea of local defence so far, but the argument serves as a link with another

consideration that makes a narrow view of local defence impossible—or at least very short-sighted—for the Dominions. The defence problem of every country that has a seaboard and any large volume of overseas trade is divisible into its territorial and extra-territorial aspects, and it is generally true that the weaker the extra-territorial defence the greater is the burden of territorial defence. The extra-territorial defence of the countries of the Commonwealth—a term that covers defence of their communications by sea and air, the holding of political enemies at a distance from their shores, and the ability, if provoked, to take the initiative by counter-attack at a distance—depends essentially on a world-wide system of which the British Navy is the mainstay. It is difficult to say where the extra-territorial system stops. It merges into the defensive system of the United States, and in a large measure it depends on Anglo-American friendship. It certainly includes the liabilities and assets implied in common defensive interests with the Eastern empire of the Netherlands and the African empire of Portugal. Any weakening of that system instantly renders graver the problem of territorial defence for every one of the Dominions, that is to say, its local defence in the narrower sense. Hence, for a Dominion to ignore the extra-territorial defensive system of the Commonwealth, or to treat it as if it were no concern of its own, is worse than myopic. Conversely, of course, every properly conceived addition to the local defence provisions of the Dominions eases the burden of extra-territorial defence for the Commonwealth and its friends.

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In comparison with the potential dangers of the surrounding world, the extra-territorial system of imperial defence is undoubtedly weaker than it was before the War, or even than it was at the time of the last Imperial Conference. In the Far East, the pre-war Anglo-Japanese alliance was regarded as such a complete insurance that the British Navy virtually evacuated the Pacific, leaving only a few minor vessels to guard the trade and territories of the Empire. The alliance was replaced by the Washington Treaty system, the strategic intention of which was to give each of the three great naval Powers decisive

superiority in its own quarter of the Pacific, while rendering impossible or highly hazardous any aggressive operation beyond that zone. The Washington treaties have in turn been repudiated by Japan, and even the Singapore base would not be sufficient counter-weight to Japan's establishment in the Marshall and Caroline islands, if she chose to confront us at a time when our battle fleet was concentrated in other waters, as it was before 1914. If the United States were eventually to relinquish her responsibility for the defence of the Philippines, and to draw into her continental shell, the situation would be even worse.

In the Mediterranean, moreover, we are now concerned with a victorious, highly armed and bellicose Italy, in league with Germany. We may be faced with growing anxieties at the western end of that sea, if German and Italian influence spreads in Spain, the Balearics and Morocco. The Red Sea, formerly a British lake in a strategic sense, is now flanked by an Italian empire; Abyssinia may be for Italy a precarious hostage to fortune, but it has the power to distract a serious proportion of British and Egyptian military strength, in the event of a general war in which Italy and Great Britain were on opposite sides. Finally, the advent of air power has presented a new threat to the security of territory and communications everywhere, especially communications through narrow channels. Even the £1,500 million programme of the United Kingdom will not do more than redress the balance upset by the violent rearmament already accomplished or afoot in other countries, and will not undo the adverse strategic factors that have been cited.

This relative weakening of the British extra-territorial defence system intensifies, as we have seen, the local defence problems of the Dominions. What are they doing in response? In general, their reactions have been in accordance with the degree and character of their reliance on the extra-territorial system. Thus Australia, dependent for economic life on a long, precarious sea route, and for national security on the defence of a strategic frontier a thousand miles from her ports, and aware that her wealth and the smallness of her present population are likely to excite the envy of less fortunate countries, has made relatively the greatest provision for her own defence, and has

projected it far into the extra-territorial system itself. Canada, on the other hand, conscious of her separation by thousands of miles of ocean both from Europe and from Asia, of the indefensibility of her land frontier, and of the certainty that the United States as well as Great Britain would stand to assist her if she were attacked from any other quarter, has made very little provision even for her purely local defence, and practically none for extra-territorial defence. But every one of the Dominions,* including Canada, has within the last year added appreciably to its defence expenditure.

Australia's latest annual defence estimates (including expenditure from certain capital funds) total £8,809,000. The air force is being expanded, and the Royal Australian Navy now includes four modern cruisers as well as minor vessels. Canada is to spend this year some £6,800,000 on defence services, mainly on coastal defence and an expanded air force. South Africa, which also concentrates on air defence after providing for the landward security of her coasts (she has virtually no navy), has provided £1,666,000 for defence in her 1937 budget. She has a plan for air force expansion which will raise her to the status of a second-rank Power in the air. New Zealand is spending in the current year some £1,250,000 on defence, over half of which goes to coastal defence and the upkeep of the New Zealand Division (two small cruisers and a training ship) of the Royal Navy.

India is in a class by herself. Alone among the great countries of the Commonwealth, she has an unruly land frontier. She also has a peculiar problem of internal security. The heavy weight of defence expenditure in her central budget has long been one of the grievances of nationalist agitation, and has brought nearer an overdue review of the whole Cardwell system,

* The Irish Free State has been omitted from this discussion, not because it is unimportant—on the contrary—but because its defensive problem is peculiar and is, at the present moment, subordinate to political factors. There is no point in discussing it along with the problems of the other Dominions so long as the Free State's attitude is radically different from theirs. Nevertheless, one of the first reasons why an Anglo-Irish political settlement is vital for the future of the British Commonwealth is that without it there cannot be a settlement of the strategic relations between the two countries, which are a matter almost of life and death for each of them.

whereby the British Army is maintained on a basis of sister-units at home and abroad—mostly in India. Financial and political circumstances have compelled India to go against the world tide by cutting down defence estimates this year from £33,640,000 to £32,900,000. But in other respects Indian defence policy is showing the same tendencies as the defence policies of the Dominions : towards greater use of air power, towards greater self-sufficiency in war material and machinery, and towards greater interest in the extra-territorial system—in India's case through the building of a navy of her own.

These tendencies will undoubtedly help to determine the course of the defence discussions at the Imperial Conference. They are inter-connected ; for the expansion of air power in the Dominions, and the protection and co-ordination of material supplies, offer special opportunities for the development of a co-operative system of extra-territorial defence. The concentration of the air forces of the members of the Commonwealth for the purpose of a war in which they or some of them may be engaged is a comparatively simple task given two conditions : the will to co-operate, and the existence of a sufficient chain of air bases, emergency landing grounds and fuelling stations, themselves adequately defended from attack by sea, air or land. It is possible that Commonwealth co-operation in defence may proceed more rapidly by way of co-operation in the establishment, maintenance and protection of such a chain of air bases than in any other manner. Such a plan would involve no commitment on the part of the Dominions to take active part in the wars of other nations of the Commonwealth that does not at present exist. If they could be neutral or non-belligerent now, they could still be neutral or non-belligerent after sharing in such passive and precautionary co-operation for all-Commonwealth defence. At the same time, they would be more securely defended.

Eventually the chain of air bases would have to encircle the globe, and an important link in it would be the ground organization for the trans-Canada route, which is already being built up for Canadian defence as well as civil purposes. But it would have to be specifically recognized, in virtue of Dominion independence and equality of status, that the use of that link by non-

Canadian forces would be dependent on the decision of Canada herself. Similar conditions would naturally apply in other Dominions—though they are more likely to be terminals than intermediate links.

That leads us to the final consideration. It becomes more and more necessary, in the interests both of the United Kingdom and of the Dominions, India and the Colonies, that understandings for mutual co-operation in defence, in peace and war, should be in definite terms allotting specific functions to each partner. This is necessary, not only to reassure Dominion opinion jealous of national freedom, but also to enable statesmen and service chiefs to draft their policies and lay their plans on an assured basis. It is significant that one of the most important examples of practical defence co-operation in the Commonwealth concerns the most republican and independent of the oversea Dominions—the Simonstown agreement between the United Kingdom and the Union of South Africa. This agreement, whereby the United Kingdom maintains on South African territory a naval base one of whose purposes is to defend the coasts of South Africa, has endured since 1921 and was reviewed and strengthened only last year. This pact might be imitated in the future elsewhere in the Commonwealth.

The details of Commonwealth co-operation for defence need not be hard to determine once the principles are agreed. And the principles can only emerge from that frank and full discussion of the great issues of world policy which the Foreign Secretary has promised.

MALAGA AND AFTER

BY CHARLES DUFF

FROM the beginning of the military rebellion, it was obvious that the city of Malaga was a point of great strategic importance. It is an excellent port, situated on a road which leads from Algeciras, and Algeciras is the nearest landing-place to Ceuta in Spanish Morocco. The military revolt had started in Morocco, and its leader, General Franco, had decided that the purely Spanish element in his army would be insufficient to deal with resistance on the part of the civil population, therefore the Foreign Legion (stationed in Morocco) and Moors would be necessary as a stiffening for his troops.

In the first month of the rebellion, however, his plans did not work out as he and his supporters had hoped. He had on his side eighty per cent. of the regular army, and almost ninety-five per cent. of its officers. He was partly successful because he was able in a short time to occupy the most important arsenals in the Western half of Spain. With such initial advantages, he ought quickly to have overcome opposition, but in Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia, Oviedo, Bilbao, Murcia, Almeria, and Malaga, those sections of the army or Civil Guards on which he had relied were either defeated or remained on the side of the constitutionally elected government. The authorities in Madrid decided to arm the people, and with this improvised force a desperate resistance was offered to the rebels. And so, for the first time in Spanish history, a really well organized military rebellion was held in check.

With his Moors and Foreign Legionaries decimated and exhausted in the first assault on the capital and his other troops unreliable, and every day the government forces growing stronger, General Franco's military position was so difficult that unless he received assistance from some source or sources outside Spain he must admit defeat. There was no necessity for him to despair,

as subsequent events showed. On December 1st broadcasting stations in various European capitals announced that a force of 3,000 Germans, fully equipped, had landed at Cadiz. A distinguished German General had arrived at Burgos as Herr Hitler's Chargé d'Affaires, and was studying the military position, with the aid of Spanish and German officers. It was reliably reported that he had informed Berlin that at least 30,000 well trained and fully equipped troops must be added to those of the rebels outside the city if Madrid was to be taken ; and that if the rebels were to win the war completely, at least as many more would be required.

After this report the first landing of Germans at Cadiz was announced. That landing was soon followed by others. It should be noted that the German troops came via Morocco. By this time it must have been clear to Signor Mussolini that, if landings of German troops were to continue on this scale, Germany would have a first right to favours from the Spanish rebels if the latter should win. Before the end of December Italians were landing in Spain in numbers which far exceeded those of the Germans. While the Non-Intervention Committee was sitting in London, listening patiently to Italian, German, and Portuguese technical objections against every attempt at progress, thereby proving itself to be an ally of procrastination, Germany and Italy were engaged in a competition as to which of them could land in Spain the largest numbers of the best equipped troops before the Committee could act. Madrid continued to defend itself, and the Government forces held their ground elsewhere. By this time it was fairly clear to those who had followed events that Malaga would be a first objective of the fresh new troops which had come to the assistance of the depressed General Franco.

In the country districts between Cadiz and Seville, amidst the olive groves of western Andalusia, in the Sierras, and along the roads, blonde young Germans and tough-looking Italians could be seen keeping themselves fit, or practising manœuvres and " open order drill " in collaboration with tanks. In the first week of January definite operations on a considerable scale began against Malaga. Landings of Moors, Italians, and Germans continued, but the Italians differed from the others in one

respect which was a little surprising to those unacquainted with Italian policy in the Mediterranean: the Italians landed in Spain were not small groups of idealistic or mercenary volunteers, but proper military units, well trained and disciplined, and fully equipped on landing. The German troops that were to fight for Franco, as stated above, had come from Morocco, and had been formed into units there. The Italians came directly from Italy!

On January 14th a rebel force (reported by Reuters to consist of 10,000 Moors, 5,000 Italians and 5,000 Spaniards) entered Estepona, and from that town the advance on Malaga became rapid. Between that date and the 18th, aeroplanes and naval units had come to the assistance of the rebel forces, and from that moment onwards the retreat of the Government militia on Malaga in this sector developed into a rout. The same story could be told of the advance on the city from the West, the North-West, and even the North-East. From all these directions Government forces and refugees retreated rapidly on Malaga. Everywhere the tactics and organization of the rebels were clearly of a much higher order than they had shown hitherto on any front. A Government agency announced that the assault had taken place "under the direction of a German staff on board the German battleship 'Graf Spee.'" It should be noted that this battleship from the beginning of the operations had remained as close as possible to the shore, patrolling the sea along the coast where the rebel columns were marching towards Malaga. An Italian aircraft carrier appeared mysteriously from time to time; and disappeared again. The advance along the coast halted from time to time in order to allow attackers in other directions to get closer to the city. It was begun again vigorously early in February, and on the 8th of that month Franco's mixed force entered the city: Italians and Moors and Spaniards—in that order.

The normal population of the city of Malaga is about 136,000, and to this had been added at least 100,000 refugees from the surrounding country. When it became known that General Franco's troops were almost outside the city, a widespread panic began. From time to time, as towns in various parts of Spain had capitulated to the rebels, General Franco and other leaders

announced that the civil population welcomed his troops as "liberators" from the "Red Terror." What happened in the case of Malaga is now well known to the outside world: about 150,000 of its inhabitants indicated their appreciation of the rebels as liberators by fleeing the moment they realized that the city could not be held by Government troops. A voluntary and completely disorganized exodus began, and the only road outwards (leading towards Almeria) became congested with men, women, and children of all ages, amongst whom were remnants of the militia which had been unable to put up an effective defence.

This exodus from Malaga and the trek to Almeria is one of the most tragic episodes in the history of a great people. The fleeing citizens of Malaga thought to save their very lives, but in this many were disappointed. German and Italian aeroplanes in massed formation swept down on the road, dropped bombs and fired machine-guns on the escaping crowd. Rebel warships bombarded them from the sea. The road to Almeria became littered with dead. As if these horrors were not enough, a rebel force appeared near Motril and cut off those refugees who had not moved fast enough: old men and women and children. It is not yet known how many of them survived. From Motril onwards the flight became one of utter despair. Most of that terrified column consisted of members of the working classes—artizans, farm-labourers, peasants, factory-workers, and clerks, etc.—and for foot-wear they had what is called in Spanish *alpargatas* (canvas shoes with hemp soles) or merely carpet slippers. Before many of the hundred miles march to Almeria had been covered, half of the refugees could hardly walk because of their wretched footwear, and many fell on their knees and crawled, leaving a trail of blood behind them. An overwhelming desire came upon them all: to escape from the "liberators," who by this time were known to be not Spaniards but Moors, Italians, and Germans.

This coast road from Malaga to Almeria curves along the cliff-tops and then dips down to sea level; in parts the cliffs are behind the sections of the road at sea level. For the rebel ships, the target provided by a column of refugees moving along the cliff-top was not a good one, but down at sea level there was

another and easier solution of the gunners' problem : to fire at the cliffs above the column of refugees, and the exploding shells would loosen masses of rocks which brought death or disablement to many.

There is no need to dwell upon this terrible story. A human deluge consisting of nearly 150,000 persons inundated Almeria, a town with a population of about 50,000. The people of Spain are by nature hospitable—to refugees they offer all they have. Although the Almerians threw open their doors, saturation point was soon reached and there was room only in the open. The town became a human ant-hill, consisting of people worn out by a trek of perhaps 100 miles and mostly starving. The liberating General Franco now sent aeroplanes to bomb Almeria—at a moment when at least three-quarters of the population consisted of exhausted refugees and four-fifths of the remainder peaceful civilians.

In Malaga itself, courts-martial began to function. A definite policy of terrorization had been introduced by General Franco in the autumn in the bombardment of the civil population of Madrid. It has been followed up by the ruthless treatment of the fleeing refugees on the road to Almeria. One example will suffice to indicate the manner in which the policy was applied in Malaga. Encarnacion Jimenez was an old woman who earned a living by washing clothes in the river Guadalmedina. She knew as much about politics as the average English charwoman, probably less. In recent months she had added to her minute earnings by "taking in washing" from wounded militiamen in the local hospital. On February 8th, she was arrested, and a court-martial accused her of "giving assistance to the Reds." She protested that she had never mixed in politics, and then she was informed that she had washed the clothing of wounded militiamen. She inquired if that were a crime. A sentence of death was pronounced, and carried out by a rebel shooting-squad the same evening.

The fall of Malaga meant to General Franco not only that he had now an excellent port on the Mediterranean, but also that he could quickly liberate large numbers of troops hitherto held up in that neighbourhood. They could now be sent to Madrid. New moves there indicated that the rebel general was about to

make an energetic effort to isolate the city. Methods of direct assault were for the moment abandoned and the rebel leader tried to encircle the city from the South ; to cut, or at least render useless, the Madrid-Valencia road ; and to capture Guadalajara, a town of great strategic importance to the North-East. By the end of February great numbers of reinforcements had arrived from the South to support him. They duly moved into position and, as these lines are written, the fate of Guadalajara has not been decided.

It may be interesting to consider the forces on each side as estimated on March 12th. On the Government's side there were about 20,000 officers and men of the original regular Spanish army. There were also about 150,000 militia—an improvised people's army—trained as well as they could be trained in the short period available. In addition there are 150,000 men rendered immediately available by the recent conscription levy. (These men have to be trained and equipped.) Fighting for the Government was the International Brigade, consisting of 15,000 foreign volunteers, with a possible reserve of not more than 4,000 men who rushed into Spain at the last moment before the Non-Intervention Pact came into force.

It is more difficult to estimate the forces at the disposal of General Franco. He has not yet announced their numbers. Foreign observers who have visited his side have attempted without great success to arrive at approximate figures. *The Times* has also attempted to do so. From these sources and also from official circles the following statement may be offered :

130,000 Falangistas (Fascists).

100,000 Requetés (Carlist Monarchists).

40,000 Regular Spanish army.

70,000 Italians (in units on arrival).

30,000 Germans (Volunteers, via Morocco).

25,000 Moors (Mercenaries).

The Moors, those old and detested enemies of the Spaniards, were re-introduced to Spain in 1934 by the Catholic Minister of War and Fascist leader, Señor Gil Robles, to subdue revolting miners in the province of Asturias. They are good soldiers, so long as they are promptly paid and have occasional oppor-

tunities for fun and plunder. They have been employed by the rebel generals chiefly for heavy fighting and to terrorize the civil population. Until the Italians arrived, Moors and Foreign Legionaries were always the first to enter a newly-captured town, and General Varela announced that the Moors, for purposes of terrorism, would be first of Franco's troops to enter Madrid. In addition to pay and plunder, they have been promised land in Morocco, and their Caïd (ruler) has been promised a measure of self-government. It would be interesting to know what the great Catholic monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabela ("*La Católica*") would say if they could contemplate a Spain ravaged by Moors introduced by a later generation of Christians. And the Cid Campeador who was born in Burgos and whose prowess against those same 'enemies of God' has been sung throughout centuries of Spanish history: what would he think of General Franco, whose Headquarters is now guarded by Moors?

It may well be asked why Germany and Italy are so interested in Spain as to have sent their sons to fight there. The answer may be too simple to be true, but it is the one given by every intelligent Spaniard with whom I raised the subject while in Spain recently. Germany believes that a European war is inevitable. She wishes to prepare for it to the best of her ability. Spain provides certain raw materials, amongst them copper, tungsten and mercury. Morocco provides other minerals essential in the manufacture of armaments and munitions, and is in every way a rich and convenient field for German exploitation. Spain, Morocco and the Balearics provide admirable submarine bases against British sea power. Italy's openly declared policy is to dominate the Mediterranean and, as an ally of Germany, she wishes to be in a position to cut England's communications with the Near and Far East, with West and South Africa; and possibly also with South America. For these purposes Spain is a most valuable territory. As these lines are written, Gibraltar is surrounded on the land side by Germans and Italians. If General Franco and the other rebel generals, assisted by their German and Italian allies, should win a military victory, it will mean not only that the finishing touches will have been given to Italo-German power in the Mediterranean,

but France will have a considerable frontier to defend in the Pyrenees. The balance of power in Europe will have been changed.

Thus, the fall of Malaga was a serious blow to British interests. The fall of Madrid may be a fatal one, which no bargain with General Franco could offset. Bargains or treaties with Dictators are useless—they act first and argue afterwards.

Yet, even the fall of Madrid and a military victory over the rest of the territory occupied by the legitimate Government will merely be the beginning of General Franco's real problems. He will then have to govern Spain! How he is to do this, with a hostile population of embittered millions, not even the most optimistic of his supporters attempt to explain. Beginning as a very ordinary type of military leader of a *pronunciamiento*, and failing utterly, he had either to abandon the effort or become a puppet for Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini. A military victory for Franco is not an impossibility, but it will merely be the prelude to a revolution—next time from the Left. After the bitterness engendered by the civil war, and the indisputable fact that the Government at Valencia representing the masses would have defeated General Franco in November or December last but for German and Italian intervention, the pride of the average Spaniard will remain. The civil war has educated him politically. He will rise again in the face of any odds in an effort to share in the many good things which his country can provide.

INDIA'S DECISION

BY LORD MESTON

A NEW world opens for India in this month of April, 1937. After more than seven years of preparation—searching enquiry, sharp controversy, patient consultation, ending in Sir Otto Niemeyer's certificate of solvency a twelvemonth ago—the momentous step has been taken of giving the provinces autonomy. The elections have been held for the new legislative chambers, and the wheels of that huge machine, the Constitution Act of 1935, will soon begin to revolve. It is not inappropriate to cast our eyes over what India is leaving behind, and the course which is being set for her future.

Historically, we have no precedent for the Constitution which is now starting to operate. It is a structure of two storeys. On the ground floor are some eleven provinces, the chief of which are as large and as populous as Great Britain, enjoying a very substantial measure of self-government, and each with a complete parliamentary system of its own. The upper storey, not yet finished, will be a federation, comprising not only the self-governing provinces but also a congeries of States which have always been ruled more or less autocratically and which range in size from small squirearchies to important kingdoms. Until the upper storey is ready, the federal authority occupies a sort of mezzanine floor, where the Governor-General lives on tolerance and carries on his duties with a makeshift staff and provisional powers. In our British Commonwealth we have no experience of such a polity; nor has India. Provincial autonomy there has often been under Hindu monarchs or the later Moguls; but only in the sense that the satraps of outlying provinces, at a safe distance from the central power, have set themselves up as independent rulers. Autonomy on the model of Victoria or the Transvaal is an absolute novelty. Still more so is the coming federation.

The preparations for occupying this formidable new building have thus been largely on paper. When its plans were before

Parliament its dangers were made clear enough—the inexperience of Indians in the delicate art of self-government, their racial dissensions, the incongruity between the different elements in the federation. To insure against these and many minor anxieties, a rigid constitution is ill adapted, and a network of safeguards and provisos had to be devised by Parliament. The resulting complexity is great, and a terribly heavy burden rests on the British officials who have to fit India into its new administrative home. To that aspect of the matter public opinion in England is singularly indifferent; interest in this gigantic experiment seems to have evaporated when the Round Tables were deserted and Mr. Winston Churchill had discharged the last of his philippics against their handiwork. And yet the next few months may well be more fateful for India than even the last seven years have been.

In India itself there is no lack of interest in what is coming. The tale of the elections, by those who have been witnessing them, would be amusing if the stakes were not so grave. In the larger towns, all ordinary business was held up for weeks, while canvassing, intrigue, and not infrequently corruption were in full blast. In the country at large, the vast total of thirty million voters were eligible; and millions of them had to be provided with polling cards bearing symbols to assist them with names which they could not read: they were enjoined to put their mark where a rude picture of an elephant or a bicycle adorned the card so as to ensure that the vote counted for Pandit Ram Chandra or Maulvi Khuda Bakhsh as the case might be. The issues on which the elections were fought were confused in the extreme, and for the most part personal. Racial or religious differences are fortunately evaded so long as communal representation is in force. Otherwise party divisions showed few signs of definition, and the only political group with any sort of party appeal romped easily to victory in the provincial Assemblies.

This, of course, was the Congress Party, which has swept the board in six out of the eleven provinces. Its triumph is even more complete than these figures indicate, for in each of the other five provinces the seats reserved for special interests, and thus not ordinarily open to be contested on the Congress ticket, exceeded one half of the total strength of the Assembly. No

impartial observer can deny that the Congress leaders, and perhaps even more so the rank-and-file, have earned their success. We may deplore and condemn their methods ; but they have built up their party from its small beginnings in 1885 in preparation for the battle which they have now won, and they have mastered the technique of political agitation and organization. They represent also the most virile element in the public life of India. The bulk of the professional and literate classes belong to them ; and they have a powerful hold on the younger generation, as well as on that inscrutable force which is now emerging—the women of India. No indigenous government can ever hope to function unless it succeeds in harnessing the energies and enthusiasms of the Congress followers to the administrative machine.

Whether they will consent to be so harnessed is the burning question of the moment. The Congress has consistently declared its unbending opposition to the new Constitution, root and branch : nothing will satisfy India, it asserts, short of giving her complete equality of status with the self-governing British Dominions. At times it goes further and clamours for cutting the British connection and letting India go her own way. That claim is in abeyance at present : the immediate objective is to smash the new Constitution. Some earlier suggestions for boycotting the elections were thus abandoned. It was decided to fight them and, after securing admission to the Assemblies, to come to a decision as regards future action. This could take one of two forms. The Congress members might form an implacable opposition in the Legislature and make the work of government impossible, or they might accept office and ride the government for a fall. Which of these methods should be adopted was discussed by the caucus as soon as the elections were over. This body recommended the acceptance of Ministerial Office in Provinces where Congress commands a majority, provided “ the leader of the party is satisfied and is able to state publicly that as long as he and his Cabinet act within the Constitution the Governor will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of his Ministers.”

Whether Congressmen, when Ministers, will deliberately set about wrecking the new machinery of government is the next

question which is exercising the friends of India. The only answer that can be ventured at this stage is that much will depend on the personal influence of the Provincial Governors. If they ride on the snaffle, there is much that they can do ; on the curb, disaster is certain. Under the Act they have many and diverse powers for dealing with sabotage. Immense ingenuity was devoted to the devising of these safeguards ; but the plain truth, as anyone who knows the Indian temperament must acknowledge, is that no conceivable safeguard, short of force, will be effective if it is directly attacked by Ministers with the Legislature behind them. The Governor will be in a solitary and difficult position : the Ministers will hold all the weapons of popular outcry, agitation, personal boycott, and the like.

There is no advantage, however, in dwelling on the worst that may happen. Personal influence still counts for much in India, and a Governor who knows both how to walk warily and to speak straight will gain the confidence even of Congressmen. There is apparent a growing feeling, in all but the most extreme circles, in favour of giving the new Constitution a fair trial. And one prediction is certain. If the Indian Minister will put his hand to the plough, he will find an immense and engrossing field for his husbandry : it will leave him, if he is an honest man, little time or desire to cry out for further responsibilities. In the nation-building services alone, which the British administrator is so freely accused of having neglected, he will have his fill of trouble and of toil. He will learn to appreciate how easy political emancipation has been made for him. In less than two centuries we have carried India, with little of the pains or struggles of growth, to the enjoyment of free institutions which it took the British themselves quite four times as long to achieve. In the fields of economic advancement and social reform, there can be no corresponding skipping over the centuries : the paths of progress will be slow and laborious. Nevertheless, the task is one which may well appeal to the imagination and patriotism of the best of the Indian leaders. If it does, there could not be a more powerful stimulus to an acceptance of the work and, with all its imperfections, of the machinery now provided for its execution.

From the ground floor of the Constitution structure, let us

move to the mezzanine, where Lord Linlithgow will now be carrying on such functions of the central government (for British India only) as are left to it by the autonomy of the provinces, until such time as the federation storey is ready. This period of transition is not without its own special dangers. It will be remembered that Sir John Simon's Commission, seeing no early prospect of federation, advised the retention of a strong central authority, more or less on the existing model. This recommendation was vehemently attacked, and not by the Congress alone, as an insidious plot to keep a strangle-hold on India's national aspirations, and to neutralize the freedom ostensibly given to the provinces. The criticism was blatantly overdone. There must be some form of central government to look after the defence of the country and its foreign relations, as well as all-India services like the railways, customs, and post offices. Until the Princes came in to share its responsibilities, there would have been little point in changing the present system. That argument, however, carried no weight with the nationalist. "Let us have at once," he cried, "a national federal government for British India alone, without waiting on the good pleasure of the Princes." The cry is going to grow in shrillness if there is any marked delay in getting the full federal principle established : and we shall be accused of conspiring with the Princes to evade our promise of responsible government at the centre.

That the present Viceroy is alive to the danger is evident from the vigorous steps he has been taking to induce the Princes to speed up their decision on whether they are coming into the federation or not. The fine initial fervour with which they hailed the federal theory in November, 1930, has long since cooled into a mood of greater caution. Infinite discussion and negotiation has been going on behind the scenes ; but the Chamber of Princes had not met for two years until a few weeks ago, and the attitude of many of its members is still uncertain. No unconditional pledge to join the federation has so far been given ; and yet it cannot come into being until, speaking broadly, States with an aggregate population of 40 millions have contracted to enter it. The estimate that has recently been current to the effect that federation will follow provincial autonomy within a year seems highly optimistic.

The hesitation of the Princes is perfectly understandable. The warmth of their dramatic declaration at St. James's Palace was due, in the main, to two causes. One was unquestionably a high sense of patriotism, a new pride in the ideal of a united India. But the other was a long-cherished discontent with the control which the central government had from time to time asserted the right to exercise ; let them only get a hand in the supreme government, we can imagine their saying, and there would soon be an end to all the irritating interference by Viceroys and their underlings in the name of the Paramount Power. From such mixed motives came the zeal for the theory. With calmer reflection came its implications in practice. A supreme federal government must enjoy certain sovereign powers at the expense of its constituent units. The Princes are not coming into the federation in order to share in the governing of British India alone, but of the whole of India including their own and each others' individual States ; and they must give up some of their sovereign powers, just as the provinces will be doing. This is the obvious price which they must pay for their liberation from the leading-strings of the old central government.

The princely order, by its traditions and training, is bound to be conservative and tenacious of its privileges. The neolithic type of ruler, represented by the late Maharaja of Jaipur, is disappearing ; but the younger generation is equally suspicious of change and equally averse from letting any outside authority intervene between themselves and their subjects. It is no light matter for them to abandon the " divine right " which neither their forefathers nor their people have ever questioned, in order to take on the role of more or less constitutional rulers. Here again history is galloping in India ; some of the old mediæval Rajput chiefs are being asked to go through, in a few months, a process which took our English monarchs as many centuries. Time and patience will thus be needed to persuade the requisite number of Princes to set their hands to the Instruments which will in each case recite the powers to be given up to the federal authority. Of the ultimate result, however, there can be little doubt. Some of the most progressive States are deeply committed to making the federation a success : Hyderabad, for example, through its distinguished minister, Sir Akbar Hydari,

has laboured untiringly to perfect the scheme. In Rajputana, the Maharaja of Bikaner gives an unequivocal lead ; and the Maharaja of Patiala has done valuable work in allaying the suspicions of the smaller States. The example of these illustrious rulers will spread, but it would be rash to force the pace of the movement.

Apart from the other considerations which weighed with the Princes in their original declaration for a federal system, they have a third, and even more powerful, stimulus in the same direction. There may not be much real democracy behind the nationalist movement, especially among its Hindu supporters ; but there is just enough to perturb a ruling class which has been accustomed to a very subservient *demos*. To be attacked by plebeian agitators is a new experience to them, and they view with apprehension the spread into their territories of the abuse and disloyalty which the government has had to put up with in British India. Their old-fashioned methods of dealing with malcontents are no longer safe. Other measures must be tried ; and so the more far-seeing of the Princes have been starting mildly representative institutions of their own, as a sort of insurance against the threatening tide of democracy. Representative institutions, however, have an uncomfortable habit of enlarging their pretensions—witness the experience of British India—and rather than risk such developments, the Princes might well feel their safer course to be a direct investment in democracy by taking a share in the general government of the country through a parliamentary system. As members of a central federal government, they can hope to exercise some control over an extreme nationalism which is already blustering about curbing their powers. Herein lies the most cogent argument for a reasonably early acceptance of the new regime by a majority of the Princes.

To recapitulate, it is difficult to prophesy while the situation is changing hourly, and any forecast may be upset before these pages are in print. The probabilities, however, at the moment are that the triumphant Congressmen will consent, in most of the provinces but not all, to form a ministry or to enter a coalition ministry. If they do, the Governors will have to embark at once on the delicate task of inducing the new Ministers to realize

their opportunities for patriotic constructive work. If the Governors fail either in forming ministries or in dissuading Ministers from deliberate sabotage, then India will pay the penalty, in another period of anarchy, for her long orgy of lawlessness during Mr. Gandhi's reign. The best that can be said is that there is no strong reason to fear such a catastrophe. Meanwhile the Governor-General will have to keep a provisional form of central government afloat while the Princes are making up their minds about coming into a federal system. Here again there seems little doubt that they will consent, though only in their own good time. It may take two years, it may take more, for the new Constitution to shake down into working order. During that time the strain on Lord Linlithgow, the Provincial Governors, and the much depleted British element in their staff, will be such as to entitle them to the sympathy of all who wish India well.

Nor should our sympathies be withheld from the Indian leaders who take up, and intend to discharge, the responsibilities which the Constitution offers them. They will, it is true, be building upon the solid foundations laid for them by the British administration; but they will inherit, and perhaps begin at last to appreciate, some of the difficulties which we in our time had to face. Of these, apart from social and communal problems, by far the worst is finance. Instead of being the handmaid of administration, which is its proverbial role, finance in India is an exacting mistress, and administration has to be adapted to its limitations. This painful fact the Indian leader has never acknowledged, and trouble is inevitable. Indeed, it has already started. Sir Otto Niemeyer certified that India is paying its way, and is capable of continuing to do so. Yet, in the very year in which he reported, the central government closes its accounts with a deficit; and a further deficit for the coming year is averted only by raising the taxation on sugar and silver, the former a prime necessity for the poorer classes, and the latter the only medium for their savings. The omen is unfortunate.

The plain truth is that the new regime is going to be substantially more expensive than the old. The actual machinery will cost more, but that is a small matter compared with the financing of the "nation-building" services, to the rapid extension of

which the nationalist leaders are deeply committed—education in particular, sanitation, housing, agriculture and what not. The money that can be spent, and profitably spent, by the Provincial Governments on these departments is unlimited ; where is it to come from ? Each province, following a well-established practice, is already crying out that it is being starved under the Niemeyer award. There is nothing more to be got out of the central exchequer, except by cutting down the expenditure on defence and internal safety. The provincial revenues tell an equally woeful tale. None of the experts yet imported—and there has been no lack of them in the last seven years—has yet discovered fresh sources of taxation, and the tax on incomes is already overdone and badly distributed. The traditional wealth of the provinces used to be the land revenue, which grew steadily with the growing prosperity of the country and with the increasing exports of raw material. The latter are now seriously checked by the glut in the world's markets and by the severe Protectionist system in which India is indulging ; but an equally grave danger lies in the agrarian policy which the Congress has adopted as one of the chief planks in its platform. An anti-landlord " no rent " campaign is a popular enough election cry ; but what if it makes the landlords incapable of contributing their all-important quota to the exchequer ? And what if another plank in the same platform is the extinction of the excise revenue as a social evil ? The provinces may soon be poorer than they are today, and the new ministers will find that political ambition and an empty treasury go ill together.

Finance, although the hardest, is only one of the many heavy burdens which the new governments are taking over from us this month. Fortunately for their peace of mind and for ours, and fortunately for the people they govern, they are getting, with the work, a highly efficient administrative staff for its execution. If the Indian Civil Service and the other public services in India had done nothing else, they would have earned the gratitude of the world by rendering this revolution possible without catastrophe.

WHAT SHALL I DO WITH SIMON?

BY FLORA C. TWORT

SOME of our friends we make for ourselves, but some are thrust upon us. Simon came to me literally "out of the blue" for he fell out of his mother's very badly made nest one Sunday afternoon, and came fluttering down from the top of the old mill tower. Mrs. Jordan's Jacky picked him up, and Jacky, who is a bicycle errand boy, after struggling for two days to look after Simon and also do his duty by his employer, brought him round and presented him to me, thinking, for no reason that I know of, that I would like him and would have plenty of time.

Well, I kept Simon and devoted myself to that bird. Every hour and a half I fed him, for every hour and a half he shouted at me till I did. I fed him on Soft-Billo which sounds like something nautical and soothing, but is really a sort of mushy biscuit meal, in which I believe they put squashed earwigs to provide the necessary vitamins for unweaned jackdaws. When he had had enough he shut his beak like a vice, and so I knew when to stop.

I got fond of him, as of course one does if one has a heart, and found myself justifying all the things they say about spinsters and their starved maternal instincts. He was an extraordinarily ugly baby, with large black mackintosh legs, plumage that was a poor mixture of down and lustreless black feathers, an enormous yellow-fringed mouth and cold bright blue eyes. He was very attractive all the same, and it was a thrill when he first fluttered up on to my shoulder and settled there for a nap.

He grew very fast after that and flew from the table on to my hand, and then across the room, and then took to alighting on people's heads. This he liked because he found hair good stuff to hold on to and dig his beak into, and nice and warm to sit on. The owners didn't always like it though. Some of them

didn't feel safe, and from that time onwards my troubles began. I wouldn't have minded not being able to call my soul my own, but there wasn't anything else I could call my own; neither could any other person with property within Simon's reach. I had brought him up in love and tenderness, so he was entirely without fear. He grew very handsome, with lovely grey fluff on his head and glossy blue black feathers, and was now about eleven inches long.

At first he did not want to fly far, and would come with me everywhere, either perched on my shoulder or flying a little way ahead and waiting for me. He had the most engaging way of shivering his wings just a little up and down, up and down, when he was pleased to see you, and he was always extra pleased in the morning or if you had just come back from anywhere. Then he would walk very quickly sideways along your arm and strop his beak on your neck to make it nice and shiny (his beak I mean).

I had a lot of trouble finding a cage suitable for Simon to travel in and keep him safe from cats. Simon did not mind it at first, but after a bit I could only get him in it backwards, talking to him all the time to take his attention. As for the cats, they were all terrified of him. He was such a tease. He would wait till they were nearly asleep or engaged in a nice wrestling game, and then walk round them in a circle till he could get hold of a tail and give it a tweak. Then he would hurry away pretending to be very busy. The dog hated him even more, for Simon would try and nestle in his woolly coat whenever he wanted to dry or warm his feet.

One day when I had him down at the mill, he disappeared. I searched and called for him all the morning with no result. In the afternoon I tried again, this time in the field behind the cottages in the village street. Through the barking of a dog I heard his answering squawk. I went on calling him and he answered me, each time more outraged and anxious; at last I traced him to one garden, and then to an ivy-covered shed, and finally to a little wooden box nailed on the wall. A dirty man with a dirty bandage on his head came shambling out of the cottage and loosed him for me grumpily. "Was just agoin' to bring 'un round," he said, "I know'd where he belonged." But I knew that wasn't true and that he'd had Simon for hours

and was going to put him in a cage and sell him. Simon knew too, and all the way back he wiped his beak on my face with little pecks and twitters of joy and walked quickly sideways up and down my arm. How could I put him in a cage after that, even though he was such a trouble?

I couldn't keep him at the mill, because he used to go and unpeg the washing in the cottage gardens, and wet sheets and shirts would fall in the mud and have to be washed again by enraged housewives. I tried him at the studio, but he would take my pencil out of my hand and fly round waving it in his beak, and inviting me to chase him. Then he would fly down into the bookshop, settle on a customer's hat and pull the trimming off it; and if there was a bowl of flowers about and he felt a bit hot, he would pull out all the flowers, fling them on the floor, and get in and have a bath. No one knew better how to enjoy a bath. After that, if the dog was out, he would try and dry himself on my head. If you gave him grapes or raspberries he would eat one or two with relish and put the next one down your neck till he should want it; then he would go to sleep on your shoulder with the smirking satisfaction of one who has provided for the future.

After Simon had been banished from the mill, and from the studio and bookshop, I tried keeping him all the time at the doctor's house where I live. Here in the country I hoped he would make friends with other birds and not come into the house much. I hung his cage in a sheltered place outside the door, and thought if I put nice food in it he would come and sleep in it at night and not be a nuisance. None of this happened, and everyone thought I was a fool to think it, so I suppose I was.

Simon didn't want any bird friends. He wanted to come in and tease the cats. He loved the doctor's house, which was a jackdaw's paradise. He uncorked bottles and laid aspirins and other deadlier drugs in symmetrical rows. He learnt the value of human food and would fly on the table, seize a beakful of butter and be off like a flash. In two minutes he would be back, wiping his beak on your neck. He could open almost any biscuit tin. At last he was forbidden the house, and only allowed in under strict supervision. I couldn't take him with me to the studio because he was what is known as "one person's

work," and when I left him for whole days together he got annoyed and flew across the valley and made friends with a little girl called Annie who lived in a carter's cottage.

He went to school with her every day for some time. At first he waited outside for her till she came out again, but soon followed her in to see what she was up to in there for so long. I believe the teacher liked Simon and made a nature lesson out of him, and didn't fuss when he tore up an exercise book, and flew round the room with a bottle of ink in his mouth. It was amazing how much he could carry. Also the school inspector came that day and was so attracted by Simon's pretty ways that he quite forgot to inspect. But the boys soon became unmanageable and Simon was given notice.

Soon after this I heard from one of our neighbours that she had met Simon at a jumble sale. Then the hoppers came to the village and Simon was off to the hop-fields to investigate. I went to retrieve him, for I felt sure he would be caught and sold for profit. But not so. When I got down to the camp, the hoppers were all back from the fields, about seventy of them, including babies and women about to have babies and husbands and boys all enjoying the leisure hour after a meat tea. Simon was walking up and down in his complacent way on the tiled roof of a shed. They had all been trying to catch him, but Simon had developed an instinct for choosing his own company, and would only snatch the food held out to him and go. I walked up to him and stretched out my hand and he stepped daintily on to it. "You see," they said, nodding to each other, "he knows his ma." It was a proud moment for me.

But, though I could catch him, I couldn't keep him, and he was soon off again. I will say this for Simon, nearly everyone likes him, and he never does anything bad enough to get himself shot. The other day he was sent back to me in disgrace, brought by Annie in a fish-basket. He had been seen flying out of Mrs. Martin's window with a necklace that she had treasured since she was eleven. Simon emerged from the fish-basket unkempt and furious, but was so delighted to see everyone that he forgot his rage at once. That was one of his charms; he never could harbour a grievance, but then neither could he remember where he put the necklace. It is strange to have such

an instinct for storing, combined with such a sad lack of concentration.

I wrote to Mrs. Martin apologizing for Simon and explaining that he had no bird friends of his own, and that I hoped he would acquire some in time and learn to love nature more and make fewer demands on human beings. Meanwhile it would be better not to open the bedroom window too wide. I posted this, feeling like a mother nourishing secret hopes of Eton and forced to watch her precious boy rapidly qualifying for Borstal.

What I want to know is, am I responsible for this bird or not? Morally, I think I am. If so, what can I do about it? He is more trouble than any child or puppy, but he has a thousand pretty ways and is quite unaware of his deficiencies. I can't put him in a cage. I couldn't chloroform him. I can't teach him to love trees and birds.

The last I heard was that he'd gone off with the ice-cream man on one of his bi-weekly visits. Simon likes ice-cream and I'm sure he'd be an asset; it would be a lovely career for him, but where does the ice-cream man go in winter, and what *shall* I do with Simon if he comes back?

THE PROSPECT OF A UNITED IRELAND

BY W. A. NEWMAN

I HAD made it clear," Mr. de Valera told Dail Eireann on February 24th, in reply to a question on the Coronation Oath, "that our attitude towards the whole Coronation ceremony must be one of detachment and protest while our country was partitioned, and while the Coronation service implied discrimination, as it still does, against the religion to which the majority of our people belong."

Strangely little attention has been paid in Ireland to this pronouncement. The fact is a tribute to Mr. de Valera's hold upon the public, which, after many storm-tossed years, is so content to have reached the comparative tranquillity of a fixed constitutional status that it is indisposed to question any of his actions. For that matter, if there is any serious dissatisfaction among those people who would prefer to see the Free State make a full and frank acknowledgment of her attachment to the Commonwealth by attendance at the Coronation, it is allayed by the persistent whisper that Mr. de Valera's hint of a "boycott" is not to be taken at its face value. Rumour says that the Free State will be represented. Mr. de Valera himself, for obvious reasons, would not dare to attend, but it is more than possible that at least one of his Ministers will reinforce Mr. John Dulanty, the High Commissioner in London, at the celebrations.

The reply is interesting chiefly because it gives voice to the last political grievance that the Free State retains in her once extensive armoury of grievances against Great Britain. She bears no grudge against Mr. Baldwin for his determined prosecution of the economic war, and would be contemptuous, rather than otherwise, if Great Britain should "surrender." One by one she has discarded the trappings of "imperialism" and the symbols of British dominance. The King's head had vanished

from stamps and coins, and the right of appeal to the Privy Council had been deleted from the Constitution, long before Mr. de Valera took office five years ago. They have been followed by the Oath of Allegiance, and, within the last few months, by the Governor-Generalship. Parliament, which once consisted of King, Senate, and Dail, now consists of the Dail alone. Since last December the Crown has had no function, so far as the Irish Free State is concerned, except to conclude international treaties on her behalf, and to sign letters of credence for her diplomatic representatives. Inside the Free State it means nothing. Mr. de Valera has kept faithfully his promise to "eliminate the King from the Constitution." "If"—in his own words—"there is any nook or cranny of which the disembodied spirit can possibly take possession, it will be filled."

Having done so much, Mr. de Valera has fulfilled his last pledge to his followers. The Free State has reached the goal whither he has been directing her for five years. Her position in the political framework of the British Commonwealth and of the world is fixed and, so far as depends on herself, immutable. She remains in association with the Commonwealth, but has shed the last symbol that might seem to cast even faint doubt upon her sovereignty. There are people who hold that the Free State's present relation to the other members of the Commonwealth foreshadows the final relation of all its States to one another. Be that as it may, she has reached the limit of her "leftward" progress. And she is still a member-State of the British Commonwealth.

There is no reason to suppose that she will deviate from this position. The people's sentiment would permit no return to the franker and more conventional "imperialism" of Mr. Cosgrave's days; and, while Mr. de Valera remains the dominant influence in Irish politics, the question of a final rupture with the Commonwealth will not arise. He has made it clear, times without number, that he has no interest in a 26-county Republic; his Republic must be an all-Ireland Republic or none. Nor is there any likelihood that his work will be undone by a successful challenge from any party within the Free State. He is, and probably will remain for many years, the acknowledged leader. Mr. Cosgrave's party has ceased to be a formidable Opposition.

One of his former Ministers has left it to follow a business career—ironically enough, in a concern which has sprung into new life as a result of Mr. de Valera's industrial policy. Internal dissension has robbed the party of some of its most useful members. Worse still, it has discredited itself throughout the country by its campaign of indiscriminating, and often ill-judged, opposition to the Government. Only a few weeks ago Mr. Frank MacDermot, the Independent member for Roscommon, and the Free State's most ardent advocate of the Commonwealth connection, was moved to wonder if the Opposition was "good for anything but mischief." By another stroke of irony, the particular antics which provoked Mr. MacDermot's comment were the hostility displayed by the Opposition towards Mr. de Valera's policy in regard to the Italo-Abyssinian war and to the Pact of Non-Intervention in Spain. In both cases his policy accorded with that of Great Britain.

Nor need he fear challenge from a Communist Left. Communism scarcely exists in the Free State, and has little hope of taking root in a nation of fiercely individualistic peasant proprietors—unless, indeed, it derives a perverse glamour from persecution. Most of its thunder has been stolen already by Mr. de Valera's own programme of mild socialism. Possible, but likewise extremely improbable, is the emergence of a Fascist or semi-Fascist movement, centring around the "veterans" of General O'Duffy's Irish Brigade in Spain. Their return, doubtless, will give rise to a mild outbreak of hero-worship; but Mr. de Valera's position as chief hero will require a deal of shaking before he is removed from his pedestal.

Let us turn from the Free State to the six counties of Northern Ireland. Politically, the position of Northern Ireland is as unstable to-day as that of the Free State was during the five years leading up to last December. It is a common Northern charge against Mr. de Valera that he wishes to "have things both ways"—to possess the advantages of the Commonwealth connection, with none of its obligations, material or symbolic. The charge might be directed with equal justice against Northern Ireland herself. She will not abandon her Parliament, on the ground that—as Viscount Craigavon explains whenever the cry of "Back to Westminster" is raised—an unsympathetic

British Government could thrust her at any moment into the Free State's arms. On the other hand, she sees no reason why, while maintaining the expensive institutions of self-government, she should not enjoy the same financial and commercial treatment as any region of England, Scotland, or Wales. In fact, to serve her political ends she demands full control of her own destinies ; for economic purposes she wants full association with Great Britain. Which is exactly what Mr. de Valera is alleged to want.

The last remark is in parenthesis. Yet, on examination, the illogicality of Northern Ireland's position does seem to have created trouble already, and to be on the point of creating more. In the economic sphere, Mr. W. J. Stewart's repeated cry for a financial " new deal " with Britain has begun to attract attention—and converts. Against the view of those critics, from the Free State and elsewhere, who maintain that the upkeep of Viscount Craigavon's Government demands a heavy subsidy from the Imperial Exchequer, it is argued that Northern Ireland " holds the dirty end of the stick." To repeat the arguments for this point of view would require a lengthy article in itself ; suffice it to say that they are highly convincing. And the net effect is that, when Viscount Craigavon is attacked on financial grounds, he is assailed not as the villain of the piece, but as the dupe.

The chief trouble, however, is neither economic nor financial. The worst result of Northern Ireland's illogical position is that it has created a condition of affairs which exists nowhere else within the British Commonwealth. Northern Ireland is the one region of the Commonwealth in which effective criticism of the Government is impossible, and the maintenance of democracy thereby imperilled. It would be too easy to lay the blame upon Viscount Craigavon and his lieutenants for the readiness with which they first abolished proportional representation, and then carved up the constituencies so cunningly that the Unionists enjoy a representation both in Parliament and on the local bodies to which their numbers certainly do not entitle them. They have—or so they conceive—a duty to preserve the six counties intact. A really strong Nationalist minority in the Lower House could make things hot for Northern Ireland. In combination with Labour and with, perhaps, a few discontented Independents, it could even " vote-into " the Free State. This is the danger

which Lord Craigavon can plead as justification for his concept of "a Protestant Parliament for a Protestant people." It excuses him—but does it justify his doubtful democracy?

But the Nationalists are not the only sufferers. An increasing number of Unionists have found to their cost that they also are denied liberty of criticism. The Government's reply is always the same: "Criticize as much as you please, but you dare not throw us out, or you will let the Nationalists in"—and this although, under present conditions, the Nationalists could not possibly get in. Complacency of such a kind is too dangerous. There have been ominous rumblings already; for example, when the Government forced its very unpopular Revaluation Bill and its equally unpopular education levy upon the people. On those occasions the people accepted the inevitable excuse; but it may happen that on another issue they will prefer to damn the consequences and force the Government either to give in or to get out. And in the latter event the undemocratic quality of Northern Ireland's institutions would be amply displayed. It would be extremely difficult to find a new Government which would be anything better than a younger replica of its predecessor, fortifying itself against criticism by the same catch-cry: "We are saving you from the Free State."

An Englishman or foreigner, knowing something about the Free State, but, as a rule, very little about Northern Ireland, is often tempted to answer the catch-cry with the question: "Why?" As to that, the fact is simply that the Northern Protestant has no wish for a united Ireland. Partly, no doubt, it is because he would be looked at askance by his fellow-Unionists if he ventured to suggest that there might be advantages in unity. But his attitude is based also on certain real fears, which it may be worth while to set in order, beginning with the least important.

In the first place, he fears that the abolition of a separate administration in Northern Ireland would throw so many civil servants and other officials out of work as to cause considerable distress.

In the second place, he is afraid that the unity of Ireland would mean "Home rule."

In the third place, he has watched the progress of the economic

conflict between Great Britain and the Free State, and fears that the industries of the North, in a united Ireland, would be sundered from their English markets. In the last place, he possesses a sentimental attachment to the Empire which is not commonly shared in the Free State, and fears that his loyalty would be prejudiced.

These arguments demand examination. As for the Ulsterman's first fear—that jobs would be lost through the assimilation of Parliaments and civil services—the possibility cannot be denied. But would not the corresponding reduction in expenditure be a fair set-off? His terror of Roman Catholic "persecution," I believe, is, to a very large extent, illusory. The best evidence of that is the Free State's history during the past fifteen years. If the right to be divorced and to use contraceptive appliances is fundamental to Protestantism, then the Protestants of Southern Ireland may fairly complain of discrimination against their faith. But of persecution, in any ordinary sense of the term, there never has been a sign. It is hard to believe that the tolerance which has been extended to a Free State minority of seven per cent. would not be extended in even greater measure to the thirty per cent. minority of Protestants in a united Ireland. Symbols, admittedly, mean so much to the average Irishman, both Southern and Northern, that their use or misuse might create occasional difference. The Ulsterman would not readily retain his membership of a county council which insisted on hanging a crucifix in the council chamber or on urging the claim of Blessed Oliver Plunkett to canonization by the Church. But his feelings would seldom be offended in this respect. Even in a united Ireland there would still be predominantly Catholic and predominantly Protestant counties, and the presence of an Ulster member on the county council of Mayo or Kerry would be most unlikely.

For that matter, it is not unfair to argue that Irish Protestantism stands a better chance of survival in a united than in a partitioned country. Almost precisely half of the total membership of the formerly established Church of Ireland is concentrated in the Northern diocese of Down and Connor and Dromore, and the primatial see—that of Armagh—is situated in Viscount Craigavon's territory. If, as time goes on, the two States continue

to follow divergent policies, the Church of Ireland may be hard put to it to retain its unity. There is excellent reason, indeed, to believe that the Church has already appreciated its danger, and has taken at least one step to counteract it.

The Ulsterman's most powerful arguments against unity, however, are his fear of economic and political separation from Great Britain ; and the best way to test these arguments is to imagine a united Ireland in being, and to see what really would happen. Mr. de Valera professes to have no interest in any Irish Republic short of an all-Ireland Republic. He has not yet acknowledged—though he certainly has realized—that a united Ireland and an Irish Republic are a contradiction in terms. Few words are needed to describe what would happen if the North should “come in.” Even if Viscount Craigavon could be persuaded to “come in” without an assurance that Ireland would remain within the Commonwealth—which is almost unbelievable—the voting power of the Ulster Imperialists would be more than sufficient to ensure the *status quo*. Acting in concert with the ex-Unionists of the South and with the followers of Mr. Cosgrave, they would more than suffice to decide any election on the Republic *versus* Dominion issue in favour of the Imperial connection. And it is most improbable that the issue would be challenged ; for the great bulk of Mr. de Valera's supporters are content with what he has done so far, and he, being the astutest man in Ireland, is well aware of the fact. Indeed, the result of Northern Ireland's coalescence with the Free State might well be not merely a territorially, but a spiritually, united nation, satisfied to bear the same relation to the British Commonwealth that the Free State bears to-day.

Would Mr. de Valera accept unity on these terms ? And, if he should accept it, what position would he occupy in the new Ireland ? The one certainty is that he would not repeat his conduct of 1922, when he carried fire and sword through Ireland in defiance of the people's will. Fifteen years have made him a democrat—as some people say, too good a democrat. It is possible that he might place himself at the head of a constitutional party with a programme of out-and-out republicanism ; but the odds are against it. Not only would the attempt be hopeless, but it would be inconsistent with Mr. de Valera's own ideas.

For all his monotonous repetition of the word "Republic," he never has envisaged his Republic as totally divorced from the British Commonwealth: in his mind it has always been "externally associated" therewith, to a greater or less degree. He has established already such a "Republic within the Commonwealth" for twenty-six counties. To have reunited the whole of Ireland on the same basis would surely be a fulfilment of his dreams, and a life's work. There is, in fact, little reason to doubt that Mr. de Valera would be the first Premier of Ireland under the new dispensation.

Such a united Ireland would make short work of the Ulsterman's fear of commercial isolation from Great Britain. Before the economic war commerce between Great Britain and the Free State was virtually as free as between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Why should it not be as free again? England could hardly refuse to an Ireland securely within the Commonwealth the same privileges which she once conceded to a Free State of defiantly separatist tendencies. Minor restrictions on trade, of course, would be necessary; for the new Ireland would be unlikely to sacrifice the small industries which the Free State has built up within her tariff walls during the past few years—or such of those industries as should survive the irruption of the far more highly industrialised North. But England needs to buy Irish cattle quite as badly as Ireland needs to sell them, and the products of Northern Ireland's great factories would be none the worse because they bore the identification-stamp of a united country. And simultaneously a new market would be opened for Northern manufactures in the South of Ireland. Internal airways must come, and with them a demand for aircraft—which can be supplied from Belfast. One of Mr. de Valera's dreams is a mercantile marine flying the Irish flag; does not Belfast build some of the world's finest ships? It may not be beside the point to mention that the directors of the new Dublin oil refinery (some of whom are Irish and some English) have recently laid a contract for seven oil tankers, worth £1,500,000, with German yards. They would not dare to do so in a united Ireland. To some small extent British trade might suffer from the new Ireland's closer approach to self-sufficiency. But Britain would have small

right to complain ; for she and the Commonwealth at large would be the greatest gainers of all.

The Free State is conscious already that her military destiny is linked irrevocably with Great Britain's. When Mr. de Valera promised Mr. Baldwin's Government, *via* Dail Eireann, that he would not allow the twenty-six counties to be used by any foreign Power as a base for hostile operations against the United Kingdom, he still left a great deal unsaid. He might have added that, so long as the ports of Southern Ireland are a vital element in the defence of the Western approaches, there can be no question of Ireland's neutrality in any war that may be waged against the United Kingdom—a point of which the Free State Army's General Staff is amply aware. Though no direct evidence is forthcoming, it is hard to believe that there has not been some contact between the chiefs of the Free State Army and Sir Thomas Inskip's Ministry of Defence.

A smaller person than Mr. de Valera might have tried to make a bargain with Great Britain. He might have urged that, even if the presence of half a dozen British destroyers could control the vital ports of the Free State in time of war, the problem would still be simplified by the assurance that Ireland would create no difficulties for Great Britain ; and, in return for that assurance, he might have demanded many things. It is an index to the man's stature that he has refrained ; and it is a tribute to his statesmanship that the goodwill of the British people has more than compensated him for the loss of a magnificent bargaining-point.

Nevertheless, while partition remains, a grievance remains ; and it is worth while for the United Kingdom—which includes Northern Ireland—to consider whether the security of the British Isles would not be better guaranteed by the existence of a united and contented Ireland. The trouble is not merely that a divided nation involves a divided programme for its defence ; it is, chiefly, that a Free State suffering from a grievance is more likely to be a complacent than an enthusiastic ally to Great Britain. As Mr. de Valera observed during one of the December debates on the Crown, really friendly relations between the two countries can only be established on the basis of a united Ireland. Furthermore, a grudging Free State, painfully working

out her programme of economic self-sufficiency, can hardly prove as useful a source of food supplies to Great Britain in the event of war as a united Ireland, amply furnished with industries in the North, and once again free to concentrate on the intensive production of meat and dairy produce.

Nor would the Commonwealth suffer from the caging of its wild bird. For fifteen years its theory, not to mention its political stability, has been threatened by the centrifugal tendency of the Irish Free State. Is it not desirable that the tendency which sets so perilous an example should be checked by the removal of the Free State's last grievance? Is it not desirable that the whole of Ireland should be stabilised, as its greater part has been stabilised, in relation to Great Britain and the Commonwealth? And is it not desirable that the germ of autocracy should be purged from its stronghold in one tiny corner of the huge, democratic body of the British Commonwealth? The present writer has no doubts about it. But any effective answer lies with the Governments of Great Britain and of Northern Ireland.

GOOD OUT OF EVIL

BY GEORGE GLASGOW

THERE would be no sense in regarding as a "problem" the prevailing extent to which human life in nearly all its aspects is dominated by the politicians. The thing has become irresistible and inevitable. The World War of 1914-18 by its magnitude and overwhelming importance to nearly every organized civilized community had the effect of general nationalization or socialization, that is, of placing most things under the thumb of governments. Labour, property, money, life itself were commandeered for national political purposes. There is no going back from such circumstance. The descent is easy ; *sed revocare gradus . . .*

At the present time it is impossible for commerce to be conducted in any country without a greater or smaller measure of political control or supervision. Money in monstrous quantity is annually extorted by governments and spent upon an ever widening range of objects: some good, most of them mischievous. In the democratic countries each election virtually degenerates into a competitive appeal to the electorate on the ground of what the rival parties are prepared to spend. Conservative parties vie with Socialist parties in their extravagant promises. In the dictatorship countries the government more crudely confiscates private property and settles exactly what its subjects may do and may not do. Liberty and security alike are gone, in the so-called democratic as in the so-called dictatorship states.

Of the bare fact, at any rate, there can be no doubt. The spectacle we see around us is of governments the world over extending an ever greater moral and material control over peoples. The exchanges, normally the automatic register of trade balances, are artificially controlled by such modern devices as Exchange Equalization Funds. British investment trust companies, whose American securities were mobilized by the government during

the Great War as a measure of war finance, are now being pressed by the government to refrain from buying American securities in order not to upset the exchange. Honest merchants find themselves shackled or balked at every turn by political interference. The political finance of the war and post-war period is one of the unbelievable monstrosities of all time. The nightmare of fantastic "reparation" figures and the consequent dislocation of the gold standard machinery; the vast unhonoured debts raised by governments; the action of the League of Nations in persuading millions of people to lose their money by investing it in political loans: these things can never be forgotten.

The old and honoured traditions of the City of London itself have been besmirched by dishonest government finance. A British Government in our time has incurred a formal obligation of some £1,000,000,000 to the United States and defaulted upon its bond. The politics of our time have destroyed the very foundations of financial honesty. Tariffs of a forbidding height are ranged by governments against international trade in the mocking name of economic nationalism. Wages and hours of labour are fixed by governments, greater and greater insurance premiums against a theoretic contingency of sickness or unemployment are forcibly extracted from employers and employed. Every manifestation of profit-making in any individual or any industry is promptly scotched by piratical taxation levied by the central political authority. More and more sums of money are annually confiscated by both central and local political authorities to spend on an ever more feverish orgy of free popular education, free popular nutrition, free popular everything, including dancing, and even on the bribery of parents to allow their children thus to be educated and entertained at somebody else's expense.

Governments meanwhile are increasing their armaments in preparation for the next great war on a scale hitherto undreamt of. Science, too, is mobilized by the politicians for their destructive purposes. Bacteriology, which began as a pure medical science, has become an instrument of war in the hands of governments. The function of the old diplomacy is usurped by politicians who shout at each other across frontiers in an almost invariable spirit of nationalist hostility to each other. The

politicians of Russia, Germany, and Italy even extend their meddlesome activities to Spain, Spain herself being split by rival sets of politicians fighting for mastery between themselves. The magnitude of the prevailing activity of the politicians throughout the world is such that it threatens to engulf all human activity, and has the incidental effect of engulfing the politicians themselves in their own handiwork. No politician in the world now has any idea what he is doing or where he stands. He must for ever, without pause, be inventing new methods of spending public money or curtailing public liberty. The forces let loose are too big for those who have unloosed them to control them.

To what, then, is it all leading? It is one of the mysterious attributes of human nature that good comes out of evil, that indeed evil is itself the chosen way to chastened wisdom and ultimate good. Christ was crucified. If politics, as well they may, be God's chosen means of chastising human kind for its own good, how is the process being accomplished? The simplest way of pondering that question is to apply it to the possibility of peace or war in Europe.

Clausewitz wrote that war is politics "by other means." Why "other" means? War is the very soul of politics. Does the unbounded contemporary riot of political unrest lessen or increase the danger of war? Germany can put 1,250,000 trained men in the field, Russia 2,000,000, Italy and France 1,000,000 each. Great Britain has started a gigantic process of re-armament involving a possible expenditure of some £1,500,000,000—half as much again as the original debt to the United States. It may be, normally is, the case that if you prepare for war, you get war. But the present case is not normal. The diplomatic crises follow each other with such bewildering rapidity that they lose much of their effect. When Germany first tore up the Treaty of Versailles in March, 1935, the resultant nerve-storm was such that many earnest and well-informed people braced themselves to face the imminent possibility of war. But there was no war. In the past four years there have been many such nervous upheavals. They are all forgotten.

Moreover, the kaleidoscope of changing friends and enemies becomes more and more bewildering. In a recent experience,

falling within one short year, we saw France and Britain bound harmoniously together (February, 1935), and bitterly estranged (March, 1936); Britain and Germany estranged (March, 1935), and united (June, 1935); Britain and Italy united (April, 1935), and divided to the very brink of war (October, 1935-March, 1936); Italy and Germany estranged (April, 1935) and reunited unintentionally by the League of Nations (October, 1935-March, 1936). In that period we have seen the Treaty of Versailles finally torn up by Germany, leaving only the Covenant of the League of Nations extant; and we have seen the Covenant of the League of Nations itself proved in practice to be not only ineffective as a safeguard of the peace, but itself a danger to the peace. It is at any rate difficult to see how a war can emerge from forces so uncertain in their direction, especially when there are so many outlets for pent-up emotions. An explosion normally results from the lack of outlets. That is why outlets are called safety-valves.

In 1914 there was no such safety-valve as European politics now supply in abundance. Nor are the diplomatic storms themselves the only factor that tends to make war less likely. There is an even more reliable safeguard. The very development of the means of war may prove to be a blessing in disguise. In August, 1914, the first British aeroplanes that crossed the Channel to France were able to carry only enough petrol for the 20-mile hop. Aeroplanes were in their very infancy. After all it was only in 1909 that Blériot first flew the Channel. When, therefore, the 1914 governments declared war their expectation was that the expeditionary forces would carry on, as always before, in a severely localized fighting area, the civilian population, including the government, being safely housed in their domestic isolation. It is now known to every Western European Government that within a few hours of the next declaration of war, Whitehall, the Wilhelmstrasse and the Quai d'Orsay will probably be bombed to bits. The first casualties in the next war will probably be the Prime Ministers of the countries that engage in war. They and their Cabinet colleagues and many of the civil servants in government offices may be dead before any infantry regiment can reach the fighting line. Prime Ministers, we may still hope, are human. If they hesitate to sign their own death

warrant, the rest of us will have no cause but for gratitude. And even if they do let loose the dogs of war, to their own immediate destruction, there is likely to be a quite lukewarm competition for the vacant job.

Moreover, it is certain that the German air fleet will immediately concentrate on bombing Rolls-Royce out of Derby and the Bristol factory out of Bristol; and what then? The seven million people of London, civilian men, women, and children; the three millions of Paris and the four millions of Berlin will promptly choke in poison gas, or burn to a cinder in their homes. No *moral* ever known to human history will stand such treatment, and the war will be over almost before it begins; nor will anyone worry about who has won it, or who was responsible for it.

In other words, the very scientific perfection now achieved in the technique of war may prove to be war's undoing. The usual organizations for humanizing war will in their turn look as silly as they ought to look. To talk of the "laws of civilized warfare" is to sanctify the folly. It is at any rate likely that when the next war starts there will be no room for nonsense about "humanizing" it. It will burst forth in all its naked ugliness. Governments may issue their gas masks and institute their gas mask drill in advance; they may enrol their volunteer fire brigades; they may practise defending their towns against hypothetical and imagined air attack; but when the reality arrives, those things will be as mist in the wind.

The examples of post-war chaos produced by hypertrophied diplomacy are innumerable. Hundreds of treaties have been concluded since the war, treaties of friendship, of non-aggression, of mutual assistance, of arbitration, which together constitute as muddled a mass of juridicial follies as the wit of man could have invented. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that no European Government today could honour any one of the treaties it has signed since the war without thereby violating half a dozen other treaties it has signed in the same period. The Covenant of the League of Nations itself is such that when the first practical attempt was made to apply it, it nearly produced a first-class and wholly unnecessary war. In the parallel case of Japan and Manchuria a few years earlier the leading people at Geneva had more sense than to attempt to apply a wholly inapplicable

Covenant. To have attempted, for example, to subject Japan to economic boycott would logically have produced a war between Great Britain and the United States, for the British Navy presumably would have been given the job of forcibly preventing any trade being done between Japan and the United States.

It is an elementary enough truth that no police system, whether national or international, is possible unless it be universally accepted within the bounds of its own theoretic jurisdiction. If the British Government attempted a police sanction in Great Britain under the condition that a dozen counties in the country were independent of the government's control, any child could tell you that the result would be a farce. Similarly, an international police system is a clear absurdity when four out of the total of seven Great Powers stand aside from it.

Next to the Covenant of the League of Nations the Locarno Treaties of 1925 have loomed largest in the diplomacy of the post-war years. The history of these treaties, with their contradictory obligations, is too familiar to need recapitulation, but in May, 1935, ten years after they were signed, the confusion of European affairs was aggravated by the "Treaty of Mutual Assistance" entered into between France and Russia. Inasmuch as at that time the rival dictators of Berlin and Moscow were shouting at each other the most unreserved public protestations of mutual hatred and abuse, the hypothesis present to every diplomatic mind was that of war between Germany and Russia. France was already bound by the Locarno Treaty in the West of Europe; now she was bound by her Russian Treaty in the East of Europe. Did it much matter whether juridical finesse could harmonize those two obligations? Juridical finesse can harmonize anything. What mattered was that within twelve months Herr Hitler had repudiated and therefore destroyed the Treaty of Locarno on which so many hopes of European peace had been built. On March 7th, 1936, he tore up the Treaty of Locarno on the argument that it had already been torn up by the Franco-Russian Pact. It happened that when, a year still earlier, on March 6th, 1935, he repudiated the Treaty of Versailles he made the point that that treaty had been imposed upon Germany against her will, and therefore was not in honour binding upon her. When he spoke in the Reichstag on May 21st,

1935, he made the clear differentiation between a treaty imposed by force and a treaty voluntarily signed. He said: "The German Government . . . will scrupulously observe every treaty voluntarily concluded even if it was drawn up before their assumption of power and office. In particular they will hold to and fulfil all obligations arising out of the Treaty of Locarno, so long as the other partners are ready to stand by that treaty. The German Government regard the observance of the demilitarized zone as a contribution towards the appeasement of Europe of an unheard-of hardness for a sovereign State."

He now argued, in March, 1936, that his own proviso ("so long as the other partners are ready to stand by that treaty") did not hold. The juridical question: Did the Franco-Russian Pact violate the Locarno Pact? was as unanswerable as most of the other post-war conundrums. The "Pact of Mutual Assistance" between France and Russia provided in Article 2 that the two countries should immediately come to each other's assistance if either, "under the circumstances specified in Article 15, section 7 of the League Covenant" were subjected to an unprovoked aggression on the part of any European State. Article 3 stated that, as under Article 16 of the Covenant any member of the League having recourse to war contrary to the pledges given in Articles 12, 13 or 15 was *ipso facto* considered as having committed an act of war against all the other members, the two countries agreed in the event of one of them being subjected, under these conditions, to an unprovoked aggression by a European State "immediately to lend each other aid and assistance in application of Article 16 of the Covenant."

It was obvious, therefore, that as a result of the Franco-Russian Pact France might be compelled to take warlike action against Germany, and would therefore bring the Locarno Treaty into operation against herself; but such a contingency could arise only as a result of German aggression against Russia. Yet it could in good logic be argued that if France, acting under the Franco-Russian Pact, did indeed take action against Germany, Germany could best obtain redress not by tearing up the Treaty of Locarno, but by invoking its operation. For her part France contended that the unilateral re-occupation of the Rhineland was itself a violation of the Locarno Pact. That was clearly true.

Article 4 of the Security Pact embodied in the Locarno Treaty prescribed that a breach of Articles 42 or 43 of the Treaty of Versailles by Germany would constitute an unprovoked act of aggression, and as such would bring the guarantees into operation. Articles 42 and 43 of the Treaty of Versailles are those which stipulate the demilitarization of the Rhineland zone.

But the wording of Article 4 of the Locarno Treaty itself is so riddled with reservations, conditions, and self-contradictions, and the criterion of "aggression" itself is so far from having been defined, that the several arguments were equally obnoxious to people of ordinary common sense.

The only interesting thing that emerges is that the politicians of Europe have so befogged themselves that no single thing concluded since the war within the framework of any juridical instrument is worth the ink with which it is printed, if its value be judged by its efficacy as a machinery to prevent war. But if they be judged on other grounds, these manifold treaties may yet emerge as a manifold blessing. There may be something salutary in the general reduction to absurdity. Revolutions, which in their turn are a normal manifestation of politics, devour their offspring. It may be that the monstrous pretensions of the political bosses as we have known them in our time will produce sooner rather than later the inevitable reaction. What at any rate seems to be immediately possible in the field of international relations is that the politicians of our time may have so deeply enmeshed each other in mutually destructive treaty commitments, and may have so generally terrified themselves by what they themselves are doing, that the next war may be averted by the very lack of any initiative firm enough on anybody's part to start it.

M. BLUM'S RETREAT

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

THERE is a question that many people in Paris are asking themselves today : What will the next 14th of July be like ? The vast demonstration of July 14th, 1935, when Radicals, Socialists and Communists alike joined in the solemn oath to " save liberty and beat Fascism " was the formal beginning of the Front Populaire. July 14th, 1936, six weeks after the great election victory of the Left, was its apotheosis. The procession was twice as vast as that of 1935 ; the human torrent which streamed with its red and tricolour banners from all over Paris towards the Place de la Nation, when Socialist, Communist, Radical, and Trade Union leaders were speaking to the enthusiastic multitude, must have contained about a million people. It was " the reply of Paris and of French democracy to the 6th of February." Has the enthusiasm disappeared ? Are the different elements of the Front Populaire no longer as united in their purpose as they were then ? Was it only a momentary partnership dictated by the necessity to " strangle Fascism " ?

No doubt, " Fascism " in its crudest form—that is, the Croix de Feu movement, which gave all the Left Parties the necessary impetus to join forces—has been " strangled " ; but now that this has been achieved, one may well ask whether the Front Populaire still exists. Nominally it exists, of course ; the Government is still the same Front Populaire Government, composed of Radicals and Socialists, and relying on Communist support ; and in the financial debate on March 9th, M. Duclos, the Communist speaker, after attacking the Government violently for the concessions it had made to the " financial oligarchy," nevertheless concluded his speech by saying : " And yet, if the reactionaries imagine that they can break up the Front Populaire and its parliamentary majority, they are mistaken." Many of those who watched M. Duclos, with his little rat-like face,

denounce Blum's surrender to the financial oligarchy, and then listened to his conciliatory conclusion, afterwards wondered which part of his speech was, ultimately, the more important.

There is no doubt that there have been great changes in France in the last year, and that it is no longer the "Front Populaire France" of May, 1936. But how deep and fundamental is the change? That the relations between the component parts of the Front Populaire majority were not always smooth and harmonious is sufficiently clear to anyone who, last autumn, heard the Communist outcry against Blum's policy of non-intervention in Spain, or who has witnessed the alarm, and almost panic, produced among the Radicals by the stay-in strike movement during a large part of 1936. Already in the second half of 1936 these two questions shook deeply, though they did not break, the psychological unity of the Front Populaire; and it was one of Blum's most remarkable achievements to have preserved the external unity of the Front Populaire, and not to have yielded either to the Communist campaign against non-intervention, or to the Radical panic over the stay-in strikes; indeed he handled these strikes with remarkable tact and sureness of touch, and without that brutality which some of the Radicals would have welcomed, but which, in Blum's own words, "would have turned the working class, so loyal to the Republic, against it."

But what happened during the first ten days of March was something new. Until then, Blum had steered a careful middle course, setting off the Radicals and Communists against each other, yielding a little now to one side, and now to the other. By refusing to deal brutally with stay-in strikes, he pleased the Communists (and the Socialists for that matter); by refusing to be dragged into a Spanish adventure, he delighted the Radicals (and most of the Socialists agreed with this, too). But all this skilful manœuvring was taking place *within* the Front Populaire. What happened in March already took Blum *outside* the Front Populaire; for the first time it looked as though Blum had treated with the Opposition—and had yielded to it. The wilder spirits in the Front Populaire asserted that Blum had surrendered to the "Two Hundred Families" the dragon whom, in the 1936 Election, all the Left Parties had agreed to slay. It now seemed

that the dragon was still alive, and that it was actually dictating terms to the Prime Minister of the Front Populaire Government !

Blum's less critical left-wing supporters claimed, on the contrary, that he had, at a particularly difficult moment, succeeded in preserving the Front Populaire and its majority, and in not "turning Ramsay" ; and that even the best general was sometimes obliged, as a matter of expediency, to carry out—or to stage—a momentary retreat. The Front Populaire programme, they said, of which so much had already been carried out by the Blum Government, had not been abandoned ; it had only been slowed down.

The events that brought about Blum's retreat are worth examining. If, in January, France was optimistic, and was speaking joyfully of the business revival, a rather sudden change came over the country in February. The cost of living was steadily increasing, there was some unrest among the workers and the civil servants, the compulsory arbitration law for settling labour disputes, which had yielded promising results at first, was not working very satisfactorily ; the 40-hour week, in becoming more and more generalized, was beginning to upset production, and was tending to increase the already highly unfavourable balance of trade ; and the Press of the Right took a special joy in prophesying that the Paris Exhibition, the success of which the Government had proclaimed (with a touch of exaggeration) to be a primary factor in France's economic and financial recovery, would be weeks, if not months late.

It is true that there were considerable labour difficulties at the Exhibition, and the builders—one of the worst-hit trades in France—were showing a deplorable tendency to practise *ca'canny*. The Treasury was in great difficulties ; it was widely asserted that if it had enough money to pay its February bills, there was some doubt about its March bills. Worse still, there was renewed pressure on the franc ; and the Exchange Equalization Fund which, it was said, had already swallowed up a good part of the £40,000,000 borrowed in London in January, and was drawing on the gold of the Bank of France, was believed to be in a desperate plight. For one thing, it had pegged the franc at 105 to the £, a rate below which London and Washington were unwilling to see it go ; but since, with increasing pressure

on the franc, it was assumed that it would still have to drop sooner or later, the speculation on the franc seemed as good as a safe bet. Not only "big capital" but also "small capital" took part in this offensive against the franc.

On February 26th, Blum declared that the Front Populaire Government was the only true "National Government" of France; he gave a solemn pledge that its programme would not be extended without the approval of the Radicals; which meant that no new far-reaching social reforms and nationalizations would be undertaken; and he appealed for the loyal co-operation of "capital." But, even in spite of Blum's veiled threat that exchange control might become inevitable if this "sabotage" continued, "capital" persisted in its offensive, for it knew that Blum would be extremely reluctant to abandon "liberalism," and so renounce the Three-Power Monetary Declaration, one of the essential features of his foreign policy of co-operation with England and *rapprochement* with the United States. "Capital" guessed right; and to preserve "liberalism" Blum was obliged to give way. Free transactions in gold were restored; the legislation penalizing "gold profiteers" was scrapped; the Government pledged itself not to increase budgetary expenditure during the current year, except to relieve the *petit fonctionnaire* suffering severely from the rise in the cost of living; and it also promised to reduce the outstanding extra-budgetary expenditure from 32 milliards to 26 milliards, which meant an enormous slowing down in public works, in the advances to local authorities; the postponement of a first outlay on railway and post-office improvements, as well as of the establishment of an old-age pensions fund.

Worse still, perhaps, a committee with M. Rist at its head, was appointed to operate the Exchange Equalization Fund. M. Rist was a member of M. Laval's deflationist "brain trust"; and his principal thesis is that public works are fundamentally bad; that purchasing power must not, especially in times of economic recovery, be created by such costly and artificial means, and that prosperity must be achieved by the stimulation of international trade through the gradual abolition of quotas and the increase, in return, of export openings. This orthodox theory seems sound enough at first sight; though it is admittedly

in contradiction with M. Vincent Auriol's purchasing power theory, and with the enormous importance attached to public works by M. Jouhaux, the Trade Union leader. M. Rist, no doubt, admits that M. Vincent Auriol's theory may have served its purpose in the past, when there were still no visible signs of a trade recovery ; but he maintains that today French consumption is steadily catching up with and even exceeding French production, so that there is no longer any need for the artificial creation of " purchasing power."

What is rather more dangerous from the Left point of view is that M. Rist now holds a key position in the management of France's financial affairs ; and that, in controlling the Exchange Equalization Fund, he may—if he wishes to—exercise on the Government the same pressure as was exercised in the past by the famous Regency Council of the Bank of France—a Council which was popularly identified with the Two Hundred Families, and whose abolition was one of the first measures to be taken by the Blum Government. It is even suggested that the banks agreed to subscribe to a large part of the new loan on condition that M. Rist be appointed to the Bank of France : if this is true, it clearly suggests that the banks are expecting M. Rist to play a political game. And the gleeful exclamation that the *Echo de Paris* blurted out when it heard of M. Rist's appointment : " Jouhaux and Thorez (the Trade Union and Communist leaders) are no longer our arbiters ! " is rather suggestive. It implied that M. Rist and his committee might, whenever they felt like it, bring new pressure to bear on the franc, and so force Blum to " go easy " with his Front Populaire programme. It remains to be seen to what extent Blum will be willing to submit to such pressure in the long run—if there is such a pressure.

The extreme Left are feeling rather uneasy about it all, though they feel that, for the present, at any rate, there is still nothing catastrophic in Blum's retreat, that it was dictated by national as well as international considerations, and that the Right may be in too great a hurry to rejoice. Internationally, his policy was probably right : he saved the Three-Power Monetary Declaration, and the startling success of the loan was a welcome demonstration of France's financial vitality as far as certain foreign countries are concerned—such as Germany and even

Belgium, where France is only too readily regarded as being on the verge of financial collapse and political disintegration ; though it may be added that in Germany this impression has considerably lost ground since the beginning of January, when the unanimity with which French opinion warned Germany to keep her " hands off Morocco " gave Hitler a salutary, if unpleasant, surprise.

On such a question France is fundamentally united ; but this does not mean that there are no deep internal differences in the country. On the one hand, the Blum Government has today been accepted, not only by the Left, but even by the Right (however reluctantly) as the National Government of France—and Blum may well enter this acceptance on the credit side, when he draws up his balance sheet of the March crisis ; but on the other hand, he has the reactions of the Front Populaire rank and file to consider. Of these, the Radicals are the most satisfied ; for their pocket book (as the phrase goes) is still on the right, even if their heart, with its hatred of the Two Hundred Families, is on the left ; the greater part of the Socialists have enough personal regard for Blum to give him a blank cheque ; but what about the Left Socialist minority, the Communists, and the trade unions ?

The attitude of the Communists is perhaps easiest of all to assess. While proclaiming their loyalty to the Front Populaire, they will try to make political capital out of Blum's weakness ; but at the same time (assuming that the international considerations of Moscow count with them as much as they are believed to count) they will be careful not to cause any kind of serious trouble which would weaken France in an international and military sense ; but the trade unions may be more troublesome. They include " moderates " and " liberals " like M. Belin, who in his paper, *Syndicats*, of March 12th, put forward a number of ideas which—paradoxical as it may sound—bear a curious resemblance to M. Rist's doctrine. Since production in France's coal mining (he says) lags far behind the increased demand for coal, the excessive increase of either imports or prices should be avoided by bringing back to France a part of the foreign labour which was expelled during the years of depression. This should apply to trades like coal and metal mining, where there is now

(even regardless of the 40-hour week) a shortage in the available labour, but not, of course, to trades like the building trade, where there is still severe unemployment.

The position of M. Jouhaux is much more ambiguous, and the financial decisions of the Blum Government are in flat contradiction with what he preached for a long time, and especially about the middle of 1936: vast public works financed by the most unorthodox—one might almost say, autarkist—expansion of credit. Lastly, there is another tendency in the trade union movement, which has been gaining ground lately, and whose reactions to Blum's "surrender" are particularly hostile: it is the anarcho-syndicalist and socialist-revolutionary wing. How strong this tendency is, and how much trouble it can cause remains to be seen. It is, however, well to remember that during the great strikes of June, 1936, certain French working-class elements displayed a revolutionary temper that puzzled and alarmed even the Communists.

The civil service are in a peculiar position. They are, in a sense, the principal victims of Blum's financial decisions, for one of them is that Budget expenditure is not to be increased, except in the case of the "lower categories" of the civil service. It means that the civil servants will continue to be less well-off than they were during the crisis years of 1934-35—when, compared with private employees, they were, of course, in an exceptionally privileged position. It is probable that so long as the Front Populaire Government (which most of them support even now) is in office, no serious trouble will come from them, unless the cost of living continues to go up at an alarming rate, but that they may become very troublesome if, by any improbable chance, this Government were to go.

Prices and the 40-hour week are the two biggest internal problems at the moment. Wholesale prices have shown signs, since February, of becoming stabilized, but the progress of retail prices is still uncertain. They have risen, since June, by about 25 per cent.; and the cost of living (since this includes fixed charges like rent, transport, etc.) by about 17 per cent.; while wages have, in general, gone up by about 30 per cent., and the cost of production by about 40 per cent. The tendency of retail prices is, therefore, still to rise. An increase both in inter-

national trade and in internal production may ultimately solve this price problem ; but the 40-hour week is a hindrance to increased production. There is a strong movement among employers to get their men to work not 40 hours, but 44 or 48 hours, though, naturally, with extra pay for overtime ; and it seems that this tendency, especially in trades suffering from a shortage of labour, is not viewed unfavourably by the workers themselves, who are not reluctant to make more money. The miners, for instance, have already agreed to work two extra days a month.

There is no doubt that the economic life of France is on the upward grade. Partial unemployment which, a year ago, was almost general, has disappeared completely ; and total unemployment is rapidly falling, except in a few trades, like the building trade, where the men now working on the Exhibition will be thrown out of work once it is completed. But, apart from that, the outlook is fairly good ; the peasants are prosperous ; and with French factories crowded with new orders, and with the workers earning more than ever before, the dangers of labour unrest should diminish, rather than increase. To prevent a further rise in the cost of living from swallowing up the increased wages is the most immediate problem at the moment.

As for the Front Populaire, its vitality was demonstrated, a week after the Government's "surrender" to the Two Hundred Families by its decree nationalizing the Schneider armament works. It was a gesture—but an impressive gesture, of which a Government that had "turned Ramsay" would scarcely have been capable.

CHEAP MONEY AND FINE PICTURES

Holland in the 17th Century

BY G. J. RENIER

TO brush aside the painting of the Dutch seventeenth century as something highly skilled, but utterly uninspired, as a slavish rendering of the visible world, would seem absurd nowadays. Yet the France of Louis XIV, unchallenged custodian of contemporary canons of good taste, condemned as pedestrian the art of a country that lacked the guidance of a royal court. Nothing great could come out of a republic of merchants.

Our age knows that Dutch painting was less realistic than used to be thought. The Dutch Masters took interesting liberties with the material world. "The Terrace," a Jan Steen, at the National Gallery, represents an outdoor scene; but the light seems to fall through windows on the spectator's right. It is a studio-work superimposed upon a background connected with it only by the artist's inspiration that moulds the composition into a coherent whole. Cuypp's dreamy cows are more than a selection of prize exhibits ready for the cattle market. There is at the National Gallery a piece of his before which the sternest abstractionist of our day could spend hours, approving of the ideally satisfying flow of lines, the impeccable balance of surfaces, the two-dimensional nobility of a powerful composition. He would find it expressive of the abstract and eternal intentions of the tangible world. Cows, of course, are the great *poseuses* of the animal kingdom. They are always ready to oblige an artist, especially if a suitable sky-line is available. It is as though they knew that while ungainly by themselves they acquire beauty in juxtaposition to almost anything else. But I cannot believe that Cuypp chanced upon this herd of cows. The grouping is too harmonious, too scientific to have been unintentional.

By whatever criterion it be the fashion to judge paintings, significant form, abstract balance, or the tactile values of a

generation ago, the Dutch work of the seventeenth century will pass muster, because in it the thing that matters is not the relation between the artist and the plastic world, but the relation between the artist and his work. The equation of the outside world with the artist is not constant ; it varies with the economics of supply and demand, with the temperament and the prejudices of the patron. The constant factor, in Dutch painting, is the pleasure with which the painter pours himself upon the canvas. In an age of intolerant religious certitude, of ruthlessly individualistic acquisitiveness, the painter, completely master of his craft, enjoyed the act of achievement that is as necessary to most men as the air they breathe. The painter, untroubled by theory, untrammelled by prejudices about the dignity and the independence of the artist, joyfully created whenever a commission came his way.

Mankind is a spoilt child. Whatever it wants, it gets—provided it wants with conviction and fervour. Machines to clothe a growing population, machines to decimate an excessive population, these are invented as soon as they are in urgent request. As it happened, the citizens of the Dutch Republic wanted pictures most urgently in the seventeenth century. Whether they needed them is another question. It is not so certain that mankind gets what it needs as easily as what it wants. Men need happiness above all things. But they have never asked for it yet with the unanimous clamour that destroyed the walls of Jericho. Have men even thought of asking for happiness ? They ask for money, for power, for pleasure.

During their great century the Dutch asked for two things : they wanted independence for their state, and a safe investment for their money. To relate how they preserved their independence, and at what price, would mean telling the fascinating but complicated story of the foreign relations of the Dutch Republic, of involved and clever negotiations, of victories and defeats on sea and land in wars waged against the greatest powers in the world. But the story of how the Dutch found a safe investment for their money can be told in fewer words ; it is worth relating, for it goes a long way to explain, not only how so many pictures came to be painted in their country in those days, but also what these pictures reveal about their owners.

It is indeed a curious fact that in the seventeenth century the Dutch had more money than they could use. They had accumulated cash by hard work and clever organizing, by playing Carter Paterson to the world, by fetching from the Baltic the timber, the tar, and the hemp that went to the building of the galleons in which was carried the bullion from the Spanish Main. Much of this bullion, by fair fight and fair trading, found its way into the territory of the Dutch Republic. The Dutch also carried salt and wine on their return journeys from the south. They sold cured herrings to a hungry world that was ignorant of the rudiments of food-preservation, they exported the cloth and the pottery and even the very ships they made in their own country. And sooner or later every transaction in which they engaged resulted in the acquisition of more gold and silver.

Should we blame the Dutch for jealously keeping their surplus wealth at home? The belief was universal in those days that one's neighbour's prosperity was one's own undoing. Profitable lending abroad was still rare, though not unknown, in the seventeenth century. Shall we be surprised that the Dutch failed to use their surplus cash to establish social justice and Utopian equality inside their own country? Again, there is nothing unusual in this. We often read, nowadays, that money is cheap and unusable. But no one except a dreamer here or there concludes that the City should shower its cheap money in a Douglasite rain of unearned credit. Let this be said in defence of the Dutch, that the contrast between riches and poverty was tempered by the sober lives of the wealthy, and a general absence of misery amongst the poor. On the whole, all the Dutch had a share in the wealth of their country.

Contemporaries appreciated the beneficial effects of this plethora of money in the Dutch Commonwealth. They realized that a state which could at any time borrow vast sums at low interest inside its own territory was capable of exertions transcending its size and the number of its inhabitants. Evelyn saw the connection between the regular payment and the exemplary discipline of the Dutch army. Sir William Temple wondered why Charles II could not follow their example and provide for his needs by borrowing, even if it had to be at a somewhat

higher rate than the two per cent. usually paid by the Dutch. Trade continued to expand throughout the seventeenth century, but not fast enough to absorb all the resultant profits. Nor was there, in so small a country, enough land available for those who would have liked to buy it. Lakes were reclaimed, and new wealth was created in this way, but still not enough to absorb profits from trade. And so the wealthy, the well-to-do, and even those who were but moderately comfortable, frequently found no other use for their idle money than to buy various ornaments, and in particular, pictures. It is again Evelyn who tells us how, in 1641, he noticed at the fair in Rotterdam the brisk trade done by booths full of the finest pictures. Burghers and peasants filled their homes with them. There were farmers who owned from two to three thousand pounds worth of paintings.

This explains how so few painters of the great age were able to work in the grand style, to indulge in the alchemy of a Rembrandt transmuting light into gold, or to dream the romantic visions of a Ruysdael. Portraits of Regent oligarchs, ordered by them, individually, or by the governors of their corporations; interiors, depicting the possessions of citizens, investments among which the commissioned canvas was itself to be numbered, such were the usual subjects that kept the painters busy and provided them with the opportunity to spend their creative energy.

If so much Dutch art of the seventeenth century owes its existence to the necessity of finding employment for surplus cash, this necessity also goes a long way to explain certain characteristics of the paintings that were thus produced. This economic interpretation, closely connected with complicated psychological motives, does not, of course, cover the whole range of Dutch painting. There remains the profound and universally Netherlandish exuberance, the joy of life of Jan Steen and many other Hollanders, so strikingly like the Flemings in their inspiration. There is also the aristocratic distinction that appears now and then in Vermeer, in Du Jardin, and in those others who reveal their kinship with those Flemings who were the familiars of noblemen and kings. But, increasingly, the seventeenth century betrays that particular streak of the Northern Netherlands, its meticulous tidiness and cleanliness.

Most Dutch interiors, most Dutch street scenes, depict an absence of disorder and of dirt remarkable in that uncleanest of all centuries. Nor is this tidiness an artist's dream. It is true to fact. Temple, and all English visitors in the seventeenth century, bear witness to the fact that the Dutch were painstakingly and scrupulously clean. They say that the streets were as clean as the houses, and that the houses were so neat one wondered if people ever lived in them.

These travellers also tried to explain the mystery that made the Dutch so different from other people. As is usually the case when ignorance dwells upon national characteristics, the climate was called to the rescue. The climate, said the travellers, was so damp that unless everything were continually rubbed and polished, dirt and rust and mildew would soon destroy the houses and their contents. Cleanliness was the Hollanders' only defence against their climate.

Every Dutch resident in London knows that this city is as damp as the dampest part of Holland. Yet neither in the seventeenth nor in the twentieth century have Londoners experienced the need to turn out all their rooms and to wash all their floors twice a week. And we should not forget that the same English climate is called upon to explain two things as utterly different as the character of the English in the seventeenth century and in the twentieth. A foreign interpreter of present-day England has told the world that a certain dullness and unimaginativeness which he thought could be perceived in the English character was due to the dullness of the climate and to the prevalence of fogs. But in 1660 the Venetian ambassador Giavarina wrote: "In a country like this, so subject to change from the instability of the climate, which renders men themselves volatile and inconstant, it is impossible to say what form the government will take."

Far from protecting the Dutch against their climate, their cleanliness increased its disadvantages. Thirty or forty pails full of water were carried into most houses every day, and not for the sake of bodily cleanliness! Many housewives brushed and scrubbed from morn to night, and maintained in the home a permanent dampness that caused ill-health and especially rheumatism. This morbid propensity towards cleaning is but

one aspect of the unusual behaviour of the citizen of the Dutch Republic towards his home and its contents.

Apart from the very rich, who had political and social duties involving hospitality on a large scale, the Dutch lived in but a small part of their houses. The remainder, including, very often, the kitchen, with its beautiful array of brass utensils and its furnace, were empty of human beings except during the periodical invasions by the housewife, her one maid, and the charwomen. All these untenanted rooms were full of pictures, of valuable furniture and of vases. There were no carpets: they would have interfered with the cleaners' activities. Sand was strewn in artistic patterns on the flags and over the boards. Only on festive occasions were the inhabitants and their friends allowed into the sanctum. Even the kitchen was too fine for daily occupation: food was cooked there once a week; on the other days it was heated up on the small oven in the recess beside the kitchen where the family dwelt throughout the winter. When better weather returned, the family went to live outside on the pavement. There was more outdoor life in Holland than in most other Western European countries.

Now, why this eternal cleaning? Why this almost superstitious avoidance of practically every room in the house? And why this accumulation throughout the home of varied objects, of bric-à-brac, of "brights" that had to be polished but were never used?

Because these rooms and their contents represented the family treasure. The unused linen in the cupboards, the vases, the precious furniture, the silver cups, often made of melted coin, were, like the pictures, a form in which unusable surplus money was invested. Nobody thought of raising the standard of living. Money that had not been earned by rapid and lucky speculation, but by hard and constant personal endeavour, could not be lightly spent on creature comforts. The only alternative would have been the woollen stocking of the French peasant. But in the Dutch Republic there were no prying tax gatherers who assessed people on the basis of their movable goods. The Dutch way, at any rate, enabled the nation to create things of beauty, and kept artists and craftsmen busy. And so, in the Dutch home, living was a subsidiary matter. Apart from an irreducible

minimum grudgingly given over to sleeping and living accommodation, the rooms were the storehouses of invested wealth. Of this the wife, assisted by her maid and the charwomen, was the custodian and the priestess. Worship went on without intermission, the treasure was handled with reverence, dusted, rubbed, burnished. The connection between possessiveness and extreme tidiness is well known to psychologists. To be worthy shrines, the rooms had to be as resplendent, as beautiful as their contents. As beautiful: it is a striking, a startling fact that in the language of Holland *schoon*, the word for "beautiful," has acquired the meaning of "clean," and is hardly ever used in its original sense. That sense is expressed by the word which means "pretty." Is this wearing out of the vocabulary of æsthetics a penalty for the ancestral confusion between domesticity, art, and investment?

As early as the eighteenth century a great change took place. The Dutch lent money to foreign businesses and to foreign governments. They bought foreign shares and bonds, and ordered fewer pictures. But some results of the domestic cult of concrete possessions have lasted to this day. There is no further need to live on the pavement for fear of wearing out the furniture, but the Dutch continue to move under the eyes of their neighbours in a transparency that admits of little reserve. The habit of turning the house into an old curiosity shop is only gradually giving way before doctrines of purposeful simplicity. The house is still cared for as nowhere else in Europe. Family life continues to be the very basis of national existence; it has grown in strength, for the family, while poorer, has conquered the home and calls it its own.

SLANG

BY G. W. STONIER

MOST of us possess, in theory at any rate, a copy of the Oxford English Dictionary. Its weight is behind us as we sit down to write letters to *The Times*; we do not reprove a foreigner without hoping that Oxford will bear us out; when we are washed up on desert islands, with the volumes of our choice, it is inevitably with Shakespeare, Marcus Aurelius and the O.E.D.

And yet, even among the learned, it is a book more often referred to than read. It sets a standard; but admits the appalling locutions so justly attacked by Mr. A. P. Herbert. It is inclusive; yet one has only to walk down the street to hear lively English of a very different sort. "Huh, it *rained* all right, always does when I moves the furniture, but I 'ad me bottle of sunshine." Do you prefer that to the leading article in which, with doors ever ajar and vistas opening, the ship of State travels on through troubled waters? If you do, if you enjoy the trills and tropes of ordinary speech, I think you will like reading Mr. Eric Partridge's *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*.*

It is to the Oxford Dictionary what the cadenza is to the piece of music. Some critics—including, I am sorry to see, Mr. David Garnett—regard slang as merely degraded language, a collection of the words which have failed to qualify for standard speech. But that is not the way to look at it. Let us by all means have a permanent vocabulary for literature, for the expression of permanent things; but what you and I talk about, what the busman or the barmaid or the soldier thinks, is not permanent and there is no reason why we should use speech which is. Slang represents the oblique, the topical, the personal, the playful, the hit-or-miss element in language. It is, if you like, the

* *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*. By Eric Partridge. Routledge. 42s.

language of the town, as against the countryside which slowly builds up dialects ; it delights in fashion, paradox, change. Two things, I believe, are responsible for slang : popular inventive-ness (remember that nothing has taken the place of folk poetry) and the common need of a defence. Slang is masonic speech which both gives the pleasures of a charade and locks a magic door against the outside world.

For several years I used to go, on Sunday nights, to a public-house round which a suburb had grown. It kept a curiously rustic look at the end of a row of shiny villas, and the old landlord would walk round minding the lamps and chewing a matchstick, as it might have been a piece of straw. In the smallest bar the same company was to be seen every week ; most of the men were taxi-drivers who brought their wives. It took me some time to get used to their conversation which, as always in such communities, was particular. One man, especially, older than the others, who had driven a horse-bus in the old days, was puzzling to listen to. He used a variety of slangs which are growing obsolete—back slang, rhyming slang and some lingo of his own. “ Been for a walk with the *Sporting Life*,” he would say in answer to the usual “ Where you been ? ” and it did not occur to me at once that he meant with his wife. *Sporting Life* suggested something much gayer (he had a racy eye), and the word served in its way to ward off strangers and to add a touch of colour to his existence.

Do you remember in Proust the phrase which bound Swann and Odette together, the bunch of cattleyas which one night he pinned on her dress, so that ever afterwards they used the phrase “ do a cattleya ” in their love-making ? A similar intimacy, by means of repeated phrases, some of which I did not understand, held the little group in the public-house. True, these phrases were more often humorous than sentimental, and they referred to such simple things as the streets in which they lived, the names of women and public-houses, and evenings at the music-hall ; but they served to close the circle round memories and to make allusion easy. Occasionally the whole party would come back after playing a cricket match under the banner of “ the knights of the road ” ; and to outside customers, peering from other bars, they were always the knights of the road. In

the evening they played shove-ha'penny. When a player failed to score he said "nineteen" instead of "none." Some of their terms were picturesque: I remember "a light in every window," meaning a score in each bed marked with chalk along the slate. At times, in the face of minor disasters, their talk had a stoic elegance, a habit no doubt picked up from the War.

Elegance, yes—though the word may surprise, pictorial humour, wit (usually scabrous or grim), irony with a tinge of the sentimental, and a large admixture of sheerly nonsensical invention—those, as I recall it, were the qualities of their conversation. Some of their phrases I recognize in Mr. Partridge's Dictionary. "Piccadilly window," for monocle, is given by Mr. Partridge as obsolete, but I heard them use that and, with the same meaning, "ornamental water." The West End was the background, as it were, against which they talked, sometimes derisively, as of a world of supercilious boozers and slap-up tarts, but more often with a humorous, defensive irony. So common a saying as "drunk as a lord" is essentially more envious than contemptuous, and all the phrases of that sort—"a toff chewing ruddy bluebells" (eating asparagus)—satisfied the speaker by reducing luxury to familiar terms. At the same time the details of their own lives were raised to a humorous grandeur by euphemism or circumlocution. One man, I remember, always began the evening by asking at the bar for a "bed and breakfast" (bitter and Burton). The usual slang for this drink is "B.B.," which he had expanded. Some years before he had spent much of his time in work-houses and on the road, and I have no doubt that his grandiloquence, which extended to most of the common comforts, dated from that experience. He would call bitter "brandy," five pence "five pounds," and so on. He lived in a state of permanent inflation. Perhaps a few of his phrases were his own, for I have not heard "bed and breakfast" elsewhere, nor is it given by Mr. Partridge.

Poverty has always produced the richest slang. (Middle- and upper-class slang of the "definitely," "abso-bally-lutely" kind seems to me essentially uninteresting, even in the novels of Mr. Wodehouse). It is generally known that slang or cant began in England as the private language of thieves and beggars, taken from the gipsies. Thus in origin it was strictly useful.

But it has slowly grown in to a bizarre, tottering creation of language enjoyed for its own sake, and defensive now only in a psychological sense. The thief-beggar communities of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had an extraordinary influence on our national life—a far greater influence, for example, than the gangster in America today. The thrill which children now feel when they hear the lines—

Hark, hark, the dogges doe bark
The beggars are coming to town

—accompanied perhaps by the vision of an inoffensive tramp eating his lunch in a field, once had its terrors. At the end of the sixteenth century the Beggars' Brotherhood numbered 12,000 in London alone. They terrorized whole neighbourhoods, robbing shopkeepers and housewives and defying the justices. Their approach to a town (many of them were old soldiers) suggested the advance of a hostile army; streets would empty and doors close; yet despite the fears of honest citizens, the Beggar—like the gangster today—cut a romantic figure in the popular imagination. Like the bandit in the corner of an Italian landscape, he is the English symbol of defiance; and a whole literature, summed up in *The Beggar's Opera*, has emerged to his glorification.

One half of slang is the direct creation of the Beggars. In Mr. Partridge's Dictionary you will find the large number of words connected with begging, hanging, prison, the policeman. I notice "a Newgate frisk," "vegetable breakfast" or "headless hop" (hanging), "a Newgate saint" (condemned criminal). A policeman is almost everything from a "raw lobster" to the current "flattie." There are hundreds more of the kind, inspired by the neurasthenic gaiety and light horror which Gay brought to perfection in *The Beggar's Opera*. Most of them, of course, are now out of date, picturesque reminders of the past. But the same tone persists in the equivalent modern slang (note that a street crowd is always on the criminal's side against the police), and even today slang revolves round the criminal quarters of London, Soho and parts of the East End, where the talk, partly indigenous and partly taken from the films, is a good deal thicker than elsewhere.

Slang, then, is the language of crime, of the freebooting

soldier, and the criminal romanticized in the popular imagination. It is also the language of sex—another underworld. The wealth of sexual imagery revealed by such Dictionaries as Grose's in the eighteenth century, Farmer's in the nineteenth, and Mr. Partridge's today is astounding. Whether this secret burgeoning is due largely to the castration of standard English, which now contains no "decent" common words to convey the details of sex, or whether, the English character being what it is, people would in any case have fled from plain statement into a region of grotesque fancy and endless elaboration, I do not know. The French, who keep their original simple words, have nothing to compare with the sexual fantasy in English slang; but then their attitude towards sex, unlike ours, has always been adult. I wonder how many of the people who go regularly to the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells and applaud *As You Like It* or *Twelfth Night*, realize the extent of the sexual joke in Shakespeare comedy; few, I imagine. If a modern audience could be transported back to the Globe, with a knowledge of Elizabethan speech, to see these plays acted with boys taking the women's parts, they would be electrified; the whole point of many scenes, the innuendo, would be revealed to them for the first time. Since Shakespeare we have retreated more and more into decencies of speech, so that now we have no sexual language at all, except that provided by slang. I wish that I could quote examples from this Dictionary. The male and female anatomy, and the intercourse between them, are expanded with so many tropes and metaphors that it would almost be possible to build up a picture of English town life from these pictorial adornments alone. The parallel with Freud's sexual symbolism of dreams—at one time attacked as exaggerated—is striking. Do you remember the lists of symbols given in, I think, *The Interpretation of Dreams*? You will find it repeated here almost word for word.

The other great source of slang is blasphemy. Most oaths are blasphemous, from the schoolgirl's "Gee-hosaphat!" and "Christopher Columbus!" to the bookie's designation of the winning post as "the Holy Ghost." The influence of *tabu* is evident here as in sex slang, and as some native tribes have a law imposing death on those who utter the name of the deity, so we punish our children for uttering oaths.

What attracts us, though, in slang, as well as its historical and social flavour, is a richness of pure invention. I have found Mr. Eric Partridge's Dictionary an exceedingly good book to dip into during the last few weeks; it is not only the largest dictionary of its sort that has been compiled, but the most scholarly and the best. Instead of reviewing it at the end of an article, I shall quote a few things which caught my eye as showing the vivid fancy of popular speech.

Niggers in a snowstorm. Prunes in rice.

Taken in flagrant delight. In flagrante delicto.

London ivy. Dust.

Gin lane. The throat.

Ribby. Destitute.

Naked as a cuckoo at Christmas.

Pop-wallah. Teetotaler.

To look goats and monkeys at. To look lecherously.

Copper's nark. Police spy.

A farthing-faced chit. A mean, insignificant person.

One can find good things on most pages, and now and then a surprising homely image which might have come from an Elizabethan poet. There is, of course, a good deal of faded allusion to historical characters, and events, and Mr. Partridge has been chary of references to the living. I note with pleasure, however, that Mr. Justice Avory appears as "The Acid Drop," and no doubt in a later edition Mr. Baldwin will face posterity as "Old Sealed Lips." The history of words, not particularly interesting in themselves, like "peach" or "bender," is typical of the vicissitudes through which so many inferior slang words pass. "Peach," for example, meant "detective" before it acquired its recent meaning of an attractive girl. "Bender" has meant at various times: sixpence, the arm, the elbow, a drinking bout, a stroke of the cane, a part of a kite, a tall story. Those who remember the short-lived game of Beaver will be interested to find an eighteenth-century predecessor in Travelling Picquet, which is more elaborate.

Travelling Picquet.—A mode of amusing themselves, practised by two persons riding in a carriage, each reckoning towards his game the persons or animals that pass by on the side next to them, according to the following estimation:

A parson riding a grey horse, with blue furniture; game.

An old woman under a hedge; ditto.

A cat looking out of a window; 60.

- A man, woman and child in a buggy ; 40.
- A man with a woman behind him ; 30.
- A flock of sheep ; 20.
- A ditto of geese ; 10.
- A postchaise ; 5.
- A horseman ; 2.
- A man or woman walking ; 1.

The old fashions revealed by slang are in fact sometimes as charming as old fashion-plates. Nicknames, too, are delightful. The other things I looked for particularly in Partridge were London topography, soldiers' slang (on which he is exceptionally good), and quotations from the great. The last were fewer than I expected.

Perhaps Mr. Partridge's bias towards soldier slang has been responsible for the one fault in his book. In a war as prolonged as the last one, soldiers do, it is true, invent or give new currency to a vast amount of slang. But since the War the swing has been towards America. Mr. Partridge does not adequately record this. The vitality of American speech, the superiority of its journalism, the talkies and especially the appearance of that new underworld hero, the gangster, have had a far deeper effect on English conversation than his book shows. If ever we have another Renaissance, America will be our Italy ; and even the accents at the street corner will show it.

THE PRIVY COUNCIL AND CANADA

BY HISTORICUS

IN Canada's early days, when nineteenth-century liberal conceptions of the true role of government prevailed ; when distances were great and much of the country's business centred around the corner store and the locally owned and operated factory, the influence of the courts on the development of Canadian federalism did not arouse much popular interest. But those days have gone. With the development of large-scale corporate enterprises, with the widespread acceptance of the doctrine that the State is responsible not merely for the safety but for the welfare of its citizens, there has developed, in Canada as in other countries, an increasing measure of government control over economic activities. The depression accentuated this development. Reform became only less popular than Recovery, and reform often meant further schemes for government supervision of trade and business. "New Deals" in one form or another were presented to anxious electorates. In unitary states these "New Deals," once past the hurdle of legislative assent, had nothing to fear from the judiciary. In federal states, on the contrary, the consent of Parliament or Congress was subject to the decision of the courts on constitutionality. Australia and the United States have both been given cause recently to remember this fact. Canada also has of late suffered, or enjoyed, the attentions of the Judges, to whom the economic justification or the political and social necessity of a law means nothing. In their view, its constitutional relation to the terms of a written document produced in the "horse and buggy" days of long ago alone is of significance.

It was natural that a depression so widespread and distressing in its effects as that which Canada has recently experienced should inspire on the part of the government plans to mitigate

its effects and prevent its recurrence. The example of its neighbour's "New Deal," which created an enthusiasm as contagious as it was ephemeral, would alone have made it difficult for a Canadian government to stand aloof and rely on the natural forces of recovery. A further incentive to action was the report of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads, with its startling revelations of Canadian labour and wage conditions, concentration of economic power and the uneven effect of the depression on various phases of economic activity. Acting under these influences, the Conservative administration of Mr. R. B. Bennett displayed at Ottawa in 1935 a zeal for social and economic reform which expressed itself in a whole series of legislative enactments. This was Mr. Bennett's "New Deal."

After the passage of the laws in question through Parliament, there remained the electorate and the courts. The first turned out Mr. Bennett, and the second have recently turned down most of his laws as unconstitutional. The United States' "New Deal" has been mangled by the "nine old gentlemen" of Washington. The Canadian "New Deal" has been as effectively maltreated by "their Lordships of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council." Canadian laws have been declared invalid before, but there is a difference now. The people of Canada are genuinely concerned with this social legislation. The issues which were recently argued before the Privy Council concerned not the right of the Dominion to interfere with the profit-making activities of this or that provincial corporation, but the future well-being of every Canadian citizen. It is the recognition of this fact that has brought about widespread discussion in Canada of a question which was once reserved for the constitutional lawyer and the political scientist; the question whether an Act passed to meet the conditions of 75 years ago and interpreted by a body of English Judges in a way which, it can safely be said, would have created consternation in the minds of those who framed it, should not now be radically revised to prevent its becoming an obstacle to social progress and national development. For that is, fundamentally, the issue which the Privy Council decisions of January last have placed before the Canadian Parliament and people.

The nature and importance of the laws recently declared *ultra*

vires the Dominion is sufficiently indicated by their titles. They are :

The Minimum Wages Act, 1935.

The Weekly Rest in Industrial Undertakings Act, 1935.

The Limitation of Hours of Work Act, 1935.

The Employment and Social Insurance Act, 1935.

The Natural Products Marketing Act, 1934.

Section 14 of the Dominion Trade and Industry Commission Act, which provided for agreements to regulate price and production in certain industries in order to check wasteful or demoralizing competition.

The legal points involved in these decisions may be left to the lawyers. They promise to provide them with a field of discussion for many a day. To a Canadian layman, however, who believes in sound social legislation on a national scale, the judgments are disheartening. Even more disheartening is the reasoning that accompanies those judgments.

In the recent judgments there is no sympathy shown with the view that the provisions of the British North America Act of 1867 should, in the interests of essential national unity and progress, be related when legally possible to the conditions of 1937. On the other hand, their Lordships seem gravely concerned that what they refer to, with doubtful accuracy, as the "inter-provincial compact" of 1867 should be maintained in all its widest provincial implications.

To anyone concerned with national unity in Canada—and it is causing not a little concern these days—it is discouraging to note Lord Atkin's emphasis, in one of the recent decisions, on the fact that in Canada "local conditions may vary by as great a distance as separates the Atlantic from the Pacific." More perplexing still is his observation, in dealing with the Dominion's power to implement treaties, that "while the (Canadian) ship of state now sails on larger ventures and into foreign waters, she still retains the watertight compartments which are an essential part of her original structure." If his Lordship thinks that the 1867 model of the Canadian ship of state was ever intended to be divided into watertight compartments, his knowledge of Canada's early constitutional history would seem to be inadequate.

The fact is that the original conception and the present position of Canadian federalism are poles apart. The intention of the Fathers of Confederation was made clear when the Dominion was formed in 1867. As in all federations, there had to be a distribution of legislative power between central and local governments. In making this distribution, however, it was the declared determination of the statesmen who formed the Canadian confederation that all questions of national or general importance should be left to the Federal Parliament, and that provincial jurisdiction should be limited to questions of merely local importance. The Quebec Resolutions which served as the foundation for the British North America Act are clear on this point. In fact, many of the statesmen of 1867 favoured a legislative, not a federal, union. As this was impossible, it was generally agreed that in the ensuing federation the emphasis should be on unity rather than division ; that the central government should be the real source of power. The oft-quoted words of the chief architect of confederation, Sir John A. Macdonald, in the confederation debates in the Canadian Legislature, leave no doubt on this point :

Ever since the American Union was formed [he said] the difficulty of what is called " State Rights " has existed, and this has had much to do in bringing on the present unhappy war in the United States. They commenced, in fact, at the wrong end. They declared by their constitution that each state was a sovereignty in itself, and that all the powers incident to a sovereignty belonged to each state, except those powers which, by the Constitution, were conferred upon the general government and Congress. Here we have adopted a different system. We have strengthened the general government. We have given the general legislature all the great subjects of legislation. We have conferred on them, not only specifically and in detail all the powers which are incident to sovereignty, but we have expressly declared that all subjects of general interest not distinctly and exclusively conferred upon the local governments and local legislatures, shall be conferred upon the general government and legislature. We have thus avoided that great source of weakness which has been the cause of the disruption of the United States.

Macdonald and the others knew what they wanted for Canada. But what Canada now possesses is something quite different. And the chief reason for this is the interpretation of her constitutional act by the courts, and especially by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, so that it now means something quite different from what its framers intended.

This was stated definitely enough by the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs in his evidence before the 1935 Special Committee of the Canadian House of Commons on the British North America Act. Dr. Skelton said :

In the United States they began with a constitution which emphasized state rights, but under the guiding hand of John Marshall and his successors, it was gradually transformed in many particulars until the balance was decidedly shifted in favour of national rights : In Canada, under the guiding hands of Lord Watson and Lord Haldane, a constitution which in the mind and intent of the Fathers of Confederation was deliberately designed to profit by the mistakes of the United States, manifested in the struggles culminating in the Civil War, and to make the central government the predominant factor, the residuary legatee, has been interpreted in definitely the wrong direction.

It might be suggested that Lord Watson's and Lord Haldane's tailoring has taken the form of stripping the Dominion Parliament of garments which were intended for it and handing them over to the Provinces. How was this done ?

In the British North America Act, Section 91 gives the Dominion Parliament legislative jurisdiction over certain specific subjects. Section 92 does the same for the provincial legislatures. One of the subjects enumerated in Section 91 is " Trade and Commerce ; " one of those enumerated in Section 92, as coming under provincial jurisdiction, is " Property and Civil Rights." Residuary power is left with the central Parliament, which is also given the right generally to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the country. Finally, Section 132 of the Act provides that :

The Parliament and Government of Canada shall have all powers necessary or proper for performing the obligations of Canada or of any Province thereof as part of the British Empire, towards foreign countries, arising under treaties between the Empire and such foreign countries.

What has happened ? Merely this—that Sections 91 and 92 have been interpreted by the Privy Council in such a way as to invalidate any Dominion Act unless it can be brought under the narrowest interpretation of the provisions of Section 91, without coming into conflict with the widest possible interpretation of the " property and civil rights " provision of Section 92. This process of interpretation by the Privy Council from the end of the nineteenth century down to 1930 enlarged provincial powers

and diminished Dominion powers in a way that would have astounded and discouraged Macdonald, Cartier, and their colleagues of 1867.

In 1931, however, a change occurred. In the important Aviation and Radio cases the Privy Council decided in favour of the Dominion. In his judgment in the former case Lord Sankey gave expression to the encouraging and sensible view that "the real object of the British North America Act was to give the central government those high functions and almost sovereign powers by which uniformity of legislation might be secured and all questions which were common concern to all the provinces as members of a constituent whole." Here was a new and refreshing judicial commentary on Canada's federal constitution. It aroused great hopes that the Privy Council was at long last about to take what many would consider to be a more intelligent and realistic view of the legal problems of Canadian federalism.

It was probably the stimulating effect of these two decisions that prompted the Deputy Minister of Justice to inform the Special Committee of the Canadian House of Commons referred to above that he had "confidence that the courts when faced with the facts, will give a practical interpretation in the light of conditions as they are today." His confidence must have been short-lived. In 1937 the Privy Council, passing over Lord Sankey, returned to Lord Haldane and to the business of interpreting the Canadian constitution in a way which throws all the emphasis on provincial rights.

It can now be safely said that the Provinces' "property and civil rights" mean nearly everything; the Dominion's "trade and commerce" little more than nothing. As for "peace, order, and good government," to the Privy Council peace means absence of foreign invasion, order absence of armed revolt, and good government has little, if any, constitutional significance.

There remains Section 132. It was thought that the Dominion, now grown to international status, would have authority under this Section to implement by legislation its own treaties. It is true that Section 132 refers to the powers necessary to perform obligations of Canada arising under treaties between the Empire and foreign countries and that treaty obligations are now incurred by Canada alone. But is the power given

to the Dominion Parliament to implement an Imperial treaty to be denied her in the case of her own treaties? The Privy Council says: Yes—if the matter of the treaty touches provincial rights as it has interpreted or may interpret them.

“The Dominion,” says Lord Atkin, in one of the judgments of January last, “cannot merely by making promises to foreign countries clothe itself with legislative authority inconsistent with the constitution which gave it birth.” If a treaty touches on any provincial subject, he states, it can only be implemented by legislation on the part of all of the nine Provinces and the Dominion. So much for Sir John Macdonald’s flexibility.

What will be the result of the recent Privy Council decisions? They will, for one thing, strengthen the demand for a re-allocation of legislative power between the Dominion and the Provinces. They have, further, definitely linked this demand for constitutional reform to social and economic questions. The Privy Council has now told Canada that under the present constitutional arrangements the Dominion Parliament cannot effectively legislate for social security. It is obvious, however, that this cannot be satisfactorily done by the Provinces. Such things as minimum wages, limitation of the hours of work, unemployment insurance, must be federal in scope to be effective.

The only remedy is a reform of the constitution to make federal legislation valid. But the natural desire of the Provinces to acquire as much power as possible, coupled with the effective assistance of the Privy Council to this end, has brought about a state of things in Canada where it is increasingly difficult for the constitution to be altered to reverse the process. The conviction is also widespread, especially in Quebec, that the maintenance, and if possible the extension, of provincial power, is essential for the protection of minority rights. Finally, the extension of the Dominion’s jurisdiction would be opposed by those economic and industrial interests hostile to federal regulation of business and labour conditions. Such interests could use, and indeed have used, the cry of provincial rights to oppose such regulation. The very fact that mere provincial laws for this purpose would be less effective than those of the Dominion is enough to range them on the side of the Provinces.

If we assume, however, that demand for reform of the consti-

tution is strong enough to over-rule all opposition, the question of the procedure to be adopted for this purpose then arises. Canada's constitution is to be found in the provisions of the British North America Act. This is an Imperial statute and can only be amended by the Parliament of Westminster. This procedure has been retained by the Canadian Government because it has permitted the evasion of the problem of finding a satisfactory alternative method. It is an example of a Dominion refusing, for domestic reasons, to accept all the implications of that Dominion status which in other fields it has been its main post-war endeavour to achieve.

The Parliament of Westminster, in passing amending legislation, acts at the request of the Dominion of Canada. But what constitutes in this connection the request of Canada? The answer to this question is not as clear now as it was thirty years ago. The British North America Act itself is silent on the subject. In early days, however, there was no difficulty, because the amendments made were comparatively unimportant, and were requested by the Dominion Parliament and accepted by the Imperial Parliament without any thought of formally associating the Provinces in such requests. The situation now is different, because of three developments. First, the growth of provincial powers arising in part out of the Privy Council's interpretation of the constitution; second, the unremitting propagation of the unsound doctrine that the British North America Act represents a contract with the Provinces, and therefore cannot be changed without the consent of the Provinces as parties to that contract; third, the growing practice of consultation between Provinces and Dominion, culminating in the Conference of 1931 when the Provincial representatives formally conferred with the Dominion Government before the passing of the Statute of Westminster. The extreme view of the rights of the Provinces to agree to constitutional change was put forward at that time by the Hon. G. H. Ferguson, then Premier of Ontario, in a memorandum to the Dominion Government. Mr. Ferguson said: "No re-statement of the procedure for amending the constitution of Canada can be accepted by the Province of Ontario that does not fully and frankly acknowledge the right of all the Provinces to be consulted, and to become parties to the decision arrived at."

If this view were adopted Canada would possess the most rigid federal constitution in the world ; one in which change would be practically impossible. Every single Province, including tiny Prince Edward Island, would possess a veto on any proposal for constitutional amendment which might be submitted to the United Kingdom Parliament.

There is only one way out of this dangerous confusion ; out of what has been called this " legal morass in which ten governments are always floundering ; a boon to lawyers and obstructionist politicians, but the bane of the poor public whose pathetic plea is simply for cheap and efficient government." That way is by a complete overhaul of the Federal structure ; by a re-division of legislative authority through constitutional amendment to give the central government the power it needs ; by confining the interpretation of the Canadian constitution to Canadian judges and by giving the Canadian Parliament power to amend its own constitution according to a procedure which will facilitate necessary reform without encouraging careless tinkering ; which will ensure adequate protection for every legitimate provincial, and, what is more important, every minority right, without weakly yielding to every provincial claim.

It is to the interest of both the United Kingdom and Canada that these changes should be made. The Parliament at Westminster would doubtless be happy to be relieved of the responsibility of acting as the machinery for amending the Canadian constitution ; especially as the operation of that machinery might force it into the invidious and imperially disruptive position of deciding between the claims of the Dominion and the Provinces. The Judicial Committee should welcome the opportunity of escaping from a position where it can be attacked as an outside body obstructing necessary reform.

If, for the United Kingdom, these constitutional changes are desirable, for Canada they are essential. There are powerful forces, economic, racial, geographical, religious, and political, militating against Canadian unity. If to these are added a rigid federal constitution and acceptance by the courts of an extreme theory of provincial rights, the ideal of a strong progressive and united nation in the northern half of the American continent will indeed be difficult to achieve.

THE END OF THE CROSSWORD ?

BY ROBERT BELL

THERE are games of a moment, and there are games of an age. Which of the two will the Crossword prove to be ?

On the one hand, you have people vowing that it cannot go on for ever, that it is played out, that it is an obsession and a craze. On the other, one sees no gaps in familiar corners of the morning papers, no cessation of activity on the part of the railway train pencil, tracing experimental hieroglyphics on crumpled evening papers. Yet other pastimes, thought just as secure, have gone. Where is the seductive ombre which saw the rape of Belinda's lock ? Where are the others of "Faro's daughters" which provided a congenial text for the moralists of the eighteenth century ? Where is even the whist of yesterday ? Games come and go ; but if the doom of the Crossword is written in the book of Fate, it stands most unconscionably upon the order of its going.

There are some who say that the Crossword is a post-War phenomenon, and the product of its times. They point out that it was from the beginning, and continues to be, a newspaper recreation—and that during the period when newspapers are at their most disquieting. What wonder if the citizen gave up reading of the dreadful aftermath of War and the crash of treaties and the piling up of armaments, and turned to the soothing quest of the solution of 17 Down (8) : "This fish shows that the girl is no swimmer ?" It is common knowledge that during the past two decades the Press has been fertile in devising frivolous and emphatically "non-news" features—what the psychologist might call "escape mechanisms" from the depression of the times. If 1937 were to bring us a world of good will we might once again give more than a shrinking glance at the headlines, and devote to the leading article some of the attention that now goes to the Crossword and the Bridge column. At all events, that is the argument, and it may be

that there is a fraction of truth in it, though the Crossword has so many attractive qualities in itself that we should be reluctant to picture it in any circumstances as a respectable alternative to the oblivion of alcohol.

Games die out mainly for three reasons : (1) new competition, like the coming of bridge or lawn tennis ; (2) change of habit, like the decay of hunting ; or (3) internal weakness. Against the first, which is a form of Fate, there is no armour, and everything moves at such a record speed today that the effects of the next few years on character or temperament are impossible to foresee. In the meantime, does the Crossword show any signs of internal collapse ? In considering the point, it should be remembered that the Crossword unites a number of separate interests which have been, and sometimes still are, presented in other forms. A large proportion of the Crossword is simply concealed (or sometimes avowed) Anagram. It contains a large element of the pun, and borrows from both the Acrostic and the Square Word. It is deeply indebted to most of the old-fashioned word games, including distinct traces of Mr. Bones, the Butcher, whose very name has a certain clue quality. The Crossword has been a great merger among games ; so much so that some of the absorbed interests, like the Anagram and the Square Word, have all but given up individual business.

The appeal of letters as an element in games, it should be remembered, is comparatively new to the *mass* of the public. There have long been bands of votaries for the various semi-literary pastimes, but these have been mainly confined to the middle classes. Now that the populace is "educated" in the alphabetical sense, it is natural that the turning of the letters to purposes of recreation should be seized with avidity. The change corresponds to the coming of the popular daily paper, which is now read by millions instead of the thousands of half-a-century ago. If the Crossword had been invented in the '70's it could never have attained anything like its present vogue. Probably its reputation in history would have been that of a genteel recreation for the vicar's evening party. So its appeal in 1937 is no sign of aberration or of mental decline. It is simply the square peg of a reconsidered pastime coming at the right moment to fill the vacuum of the public intelligence, rendered

more or less square by the Education Acts of 1870 and 1902.

To certain people of fastidious taste that process of democratization is naturally painful. Words are beautiful things (though not so beautiful as they were in Shakespeare's time), and it is almost a shock to have them used as skittles for the entertainment of (more or less) lowbrows—or, at least, by brows contracted to something notably less than the maximum. The expectation that in time these brows will come to appreciate the æsthetic value of the counters is probably ill-founded, as ill-founded as the expectation that fishermen should be good judges of scenery, or that the footballer should be ecstatic over the graceful curves of the soaring ball. And the very essence of the Crossword is the outrageous practice of hewing these words limb from limb. We know the system. "Carpet" must not be considered as an item of upholstery, but as "car-pet" ("the motoring favourite"); "malefactor" becomes two syllables, and "mainspring" three ("mother is a moving influence in March"). Or even the aid of Roman numerals is called in, and we are invited to reconsider the accentuation of "viperish" to fit the clue: "Six die in a snaky way." The general effect, to the sensitive eye, is that of living in a room full of distorted mirrors: the very words disguise themselves as one views them from this ghoulish and anatomical standpoint. Do school-teachers, one wonders, who discuss the literary influence of the cinema, ever take account of the effects of this new craze? It is as if a butcher's boy, used to handling the bleeding joints, should be expected to infer the unmaimed animal in full strength and health. The opinion sometimes heard that the mere handling of words has an elevating effect seems to have no basis in fact. The very utmost that the Crossword can do is to correct certain misapprehensions as to the meaning of words (such as the difference between "prone" and "supine" and between "copy" and "replica"), and to confer a certain enlargement of vocabulary, largely in quite needless and unhelpful ways.

Then there is the old bogey of exhaustibility, which Herbert Spencer found so perplexing in the matter of music. Will not all the words be used up? There is no danger. Only a small proportion of dictionary words are available for Crossword purposes; the great part are too technical or unfamiliar. There

is, however, a risk that the chosen few will be overworked. When the Crossword-maker has devised his tenth or twelfth clue for "statue" or "alibi" or "niece" he is near the end of his tether. He must either become so extravagant or remote as to be misleading, or so general as to be obscure. And naturally the solver grows more wary month by month, and the ground has to be shifted accordingly. There was a time when the word "hill" in a clue inevitably pointed to "tor," and "gee" (or *g*) was a horse. These mines have been long exploded, and the wits of the deviser have to be strained accordingly. That course of evolution seems to point to a gradual increase of difficulty to the point of impossibility, but the human mind is an elastic instrument, and we are not near that point yet. The public will never be drawn beyond the point at which there is more fun than labour; and it is the business of editors to see that that point is not too nearly approached.

Undoubtedly a real peril in the path of the Crossword of today is the plentitude of apparatus. It is in danger of losing its simplicity of appeal, which has been the secret of its success from the beginning. It is in essence the oldest game in the world—the riddle: the same sort of riddle which Samson propounded to the Philistines (allowing them the usual week's pause): "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." Samson was really more difficult than Torquemada, for he gave no hint of the *literal* meaning of the solution, as the etiquette of the Crossword demands. There should have been some suggestion of the lion and the honey, without which the modern solver would be completely at sea. It is reassuring to find that neither did the Philistines solve it. Today the reader would demand to be told, at least, that the creature was "royal" or "tawny," or was the last stage of a revolt, or that it represented advice to Ananias to carry on as before; while honey might be a "sweetstuff of internal unity," or in some sort of relation to "swarm" or "sting." The problem was, in fact, too much of a poser: for Samson, owing to his early date, had none of the modern sense of sportsmanship.

So the riddle basis must be kept up, with the simplicity of idea matched by a new simplicity of presentation. The Crossword became popular because the plain citizen, going home by

train or bus after his day's work, could spend the hour or half-hour of the journey over the task of solution. That was the ideal: that the solver should be an average man, and that he should solve the problem by no other means than his own wits. But today a large proportion of Crosswords obviously expect more than self-help. Already a whole library of dictionaries, thesauruses, classified lists, has sprung up to lighten the labour of solution. The solver is asked to identify "a fish," "a flower," "a famous poet." At one time it might have proved a poser. Today he has only to turn to his bookshelves for a dictionary to find full lists of fish, flowers and famous poets tabulated according to the number of letters and according to the first and last letters. It is the trick of the funicular railway: one has the satisfaction of reaching the journey's end, but not the greater satisfaction of reaching it by one's own exertions. It is easy to see how such a system can be expanded so as to take all the savour out of the Crossword. Once it becomes a definitely literary and bookshelf pastime, with all the advantage for the well-to-do that the change involves, it will lose its hold on the general public.

Or will the end come through a sudden realization of the appalling waste of time spent in this juggling with the simulacra of words? If the mental effort involved in the struggle with a single day's crosswords could be concentrated on some piece of work worth the doing, what might not be accomplished? We are accustomed to calculate from time to time how much our rates, our colds-in-the-head, our drink and tobacco, cost us. What about our wasted powers of thought? It is nobody's fault. No one has found a means of canalizing human cerebration, and it keeps trickling away in the sand in every direction. Perhaps the law is that the effort is worth while for its own sake, as we set dogs to jump over sticks. It might well be that if some serious-minded dictator abolished the Crossword, the world would relapse on a more deleterious alternative. The Quest of the Clue, if, in the eye of the philosopher, unworthy the Heir of the Ages and the Little-Lower-Than-The-Angels, is at least inoffensive, and it has the Victorian virtue of keeping idle hands out of mischief. Did Nero fiddle while Rome burned? At least other Roman Emperors have done worse than that in unoccupied moments.

THE FUTURE OF MARKETING BOARDS

BY L. F. EASTERBROOK

IT is nearly four years since the nation embarked upon the great experiment in agricultural co-operation known as the marketing boards. They have been an adventure in organization on a national scale, enjoyed more, perhaps, by the dispassionate onlooker than by those producers who have suffered by the inevitable mistakes that have from time to time been made.

No one should imagine that the farmers like the boards. They hate them, with the hatred of a race of the most confirmed individualists who for generations have cherished their right to go bankrupt by individual bargaining. The fruit and glass-house growers have shivered on the brink, and cannot nerve themselves to plunge; the 500,000 poultry keepers, many of them only hobbyists, have definitely refused to leap into the common pool, and have now retired to sulk in their 500,000 little cubicles. But of those who have taken a chance—the hops and potato growers and the pigs and milk producers—none of them, not even the pig producers, who have been tried to the limit of endurance, wish to see their marketing schemes abolished. For they realize that the boards, however hateful they may be, are necessary fortresses in a world of buyers so strongly entrenched and armed. In fact, the chief complaint of the pig producers is that their scheme, as it has existed hitherto, leaves too many free lances outside its scope who can get better prices for their pigs because of the self-discipline of those within the scheme. The pig scheme's temporary failure springs from exactly the same cause as the failure of the old voluntary co-operative schemes. It has been like the former voluntary hops scheme, in which a 13 per cent. minority outside were able to smash the efforts of the other 87 per cent. The majority in the scheme held the baby, while those outside had the fun and made the

big money. The pig scheme will be amended, but the amendment will not be acceptable unless it brings all sales of bacon pigs within its net.

The farmers accepted the marketing boards in the first place because they believed that the control of foreign imports was conditional upon this measure of self-organization. That is why they still vaguely feel that they are conferring a favour upon someone other than themselves if they decide to have a marketing scheme for any commodity. Having swallowed the pill, they have found that, bitter as its taste may be, the actual results are not so alarming. But if their natural distaste for any kind of collective action is borne in mind, it will not be difficult to understand why they are now thoroughly frightened by a new marketing bogey that has poked its head over the hedges of the self-contained fields of rural Britain.

This bogey is the Permanent Commission. It has existed since last year, when it was given material form by Act of Parliament in the Sugar Commission.

The Sugar Commission was accepted without fuss because after the Greene Report, recommending the abolition of the industry, both growers and factory owners were thankful for small mercies and glad to find themselves still in existence. But when, last November, the Milk Reorganization Commission made a similar recommendation for the dairying industry, the fat was in the fire. The National Farmers' Union, without waiting to study the Report in detail, fired off a crashing broadside on the day the Report was published. In spite of its lack of intelligent, or intelligible, criticism it found an answering spark in the hearts of thousands of milk-producing individualists. There is no doubt that, at the moment, the idea of a Permanent Commission is as objectionable to the majority of dairy farmers as it is to the N.F.U. Council. But at one time the idea of marketing boards was just as unpopular in the same quarters, although the N.F.U., to its credit, has since played a major part in introducing some of them.

The new Livestock Bill also envisages a permanent commission, composed of independent persons unconnected with any branch of the industry, to carry out similar functions to those of the Sugar Commission. It will administer the subsidy, promote

efficiency, safeguard the consumer, and see that the producer gets a square deal from the numerous agencies and channels through which his product passes.

One can understand and sympathize with the farmer's revulsion from the whole idea. Most of us love independence. But in a world that is becoming more and more organized, where small businesses are becoming absorbed into large companies, companies into combines, one-man shops into chain stores, more and more of us are being forced to find other means of expressing our individuality, and no one can show any way of escape. Moreover, since the State is giving aid to the farmer in so many ways by subsidy, tariff, and quota, the 93 per cent. who are not farmers are becoming increasingly anxious to be reassured that they are helping an efficient industry. As food prices rise—and they are almost certain to rise—these queries from the consumers will become more insistent.

And is it really as bad as all that? No one is going to tell the farmer how to farm. The work of producing food will continue to be one of the most individualistic and highly skilled of any in the world. The Permanent Commission does not foresee interference with "the man on the farm." His own marketing board would look after him. Nor would the Commission be composed of lunatics, as some seem to assume. They would be independent men of proved business ability, and by choosing men from outside to organize agriculture the industry would be doing the same as most other big industries. Organization is a specialist's job, especially when it has to be applied to some 350,000 small concerns spread over 27,000,000 acres and producing £250,000,000's worth of food at wholesale prices. The need for an impartial body to see clearly what has to be done need hardly be stressed. One has only to look at the confused jumble of agricultural policy at the moment to realize it. In the midst of it all the ordinary man feels vaguely benevolent towards farming, but is pardonably at a loss to know what is the best way to help. If his food prices should rise to a degree that he thinks unjust, his benevolence will turn to irritation, especially if he suspects that he is being asked to subsidize an inefficient industry. Irritated, he will soon become petulant, and in the end he may well decide to put an end to those pin-

pricks he suffers every time he goes to buy his food or pay his taxes, and he will revert to the bad old system of encouraging the Dominion farmers and the foreigners to feed him, letting the home farmers go hang.

So there is need for far-sighted and impartial persons, in permanent touch with the particular farm commodity with which they are concerned, to sort out some of this muddle. To organize the different branches of farming is an exceedingly intricate business, and no *ad hoc* body, such as a temporary special commission, could possibly be expected to review a branch of farming, even in a year or two, and lay down a permanent policy that time would prove faultless.

Moreover, it has become necessary to reassure the consumer, who is also the taxpayer and the voter, that he is getting value for his money and is not being exploited. He does not like the idea of handing over complete control of home-grown food to cartels of producers, and it cuts no ice at all to tell him what is quite true, namely, that for years other vested interests have controlled his food bill. There have already been murmurings about milk, which has risen in price since the Milk Board existed, and there have been murmurings about bacon, although it is cheaper today than when the bacon industry was last in a normal condition.

And can anyone reasonably expect organized bodies of producers to take the long view that ultimately farmers must satisfy consumers? The annual meetings of the N.F.U. are delightful affairs, where most of the practical problems of farming are good-humouredly discussed. But when all is said, they are only the meetings of a particularly pertinacious trade union that would be failing in its duty if it did not press the immediate needs of its members to the full. In the case of the marketing boards, the members who serve on them must be elected by popular vote. They must walk warily, for they are dependent for their seats upon a majority of farmers who, naturally, have but a distant acquaintance with the modern technique of salesmanship and marketing. Nor is it easy to explain to them that there are some things that are politically most unwise, others that are impossible.

The man in the street can hardly be blamed if he is a little

dubious about giving monopolistic powers over his food to such concerns.

But it would be a mistake to think of the Permanent Commission simply as a concession by producers to the susceptibilities of consumers. Farmers have broken with tradition and made radical changes in their endeavours to make home food production more efficient. They are also organizing themselves to obtain "a fairer share of the consumer's dollar." But it is doubtful if the marketing boards, staffed by farmer-directorates, would ever be strong enough to impose other necessary reforms upon the many interests that take their toll of the prices the consumer eventually pays.

It is doubtful, for instance, if a mere producers' board could compel a pugnacious city corporation or town council to close a redundant livestock market or bring it up to date. They might well come off second best in any struggle with such powerful bodies as the butchers or the meat importers in attempting to bring about necessary change in the meat industry. In the case of milk, it is notorious that the lack of organization on the distributive side is adding to the cost of distribution very considerably. In former days the farmer ultimately bore the cost; more recently he has obtained a little better share, but the distributors have handed the increase on to the public in many cases and again the farmer suffers, for the higher price means that less milk is consumed at the fresh-milk price. The Committee of Investigation that reported last April called attention to the wasteful distributive methods of the milk industry, but could only suggest, rather half-heartedly, that the Milk Board should put pressure on the distributors to reorganize. There is no sign of the Milk Board doing this and, when it comes down to hard facts, it is difficult to imagine how they possibly could; assuredly they cannot be anxious for the task. But a Permanent Commission could see that it was done. These are only two of many conceivable instances.

Finally, many producers are nervous about the Permanent Commission having the power to fix prices when normal negotiations break down. They talk of preserving the right of the Board to fix prices. But the two outstanding examples show how illusory is this idea in practice. The Milk Board prescribed

prices in 1935. Forty thousand pounds was then spent on a Committee of Investigation, of which the upshot was that the Board's prescribed prices were annulled. The Pigs' Board spent six months wrangling over contract prices with the Bacon Board. Had they exercised this right of fixing prices, the Bacon Board would have voted the scheme out and refused to play. The upshot of this was that Sir Robert Greig was called in to arbitrate, and he and his fellow arbitrators fixed prices.

In all these price disputes the farmer is at a disadvantage because time is against him. The milk goes on being produced, the pigs being reared, and they both must be disposed of within a short time limit. But the existence of a Permanent Commission would mean that if contracts were not agreed upon between the parties within a reasonable period, a settlement would be immediately forthcoming from the Commission, composed of business men in permanent touch with both sides of the industry. This is an important consideration, for a hastily appointed arbitrator means a tremendous gamble. Within a few weeks he has to make himself acquainted with a most intricate position and a highly complicated industry. He may give a wise decision, as did Sir Robert Greig. But there was one occasion when some of the arbitrator's terms were so hard on the farmers that the other side refused to enforce them. Even where profits are being made on the farm they are so modest that the farmers have little need to fear worse conditions being imposed upon them. They have no secret profiteering to conceal. Therefore, from the farmers' point of view alone, the Permanent Commission might well prove not a menace, but an insurance and a safeguard against interests that have often so successfully exploited them in the past.

EBB AND FLOW

A Monthly Commentary

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

PROBABLY in fifty years from now, or even in five-and-twenty, the most important events of these exciting months will be seen to have passed in countries about which Europe at large did not trouble its head. Menace of war challenges attention as no peaceful process can do ; and there is none in the United States and none in India. Yet it looks as if President Roosevelt's policy and his smashing electoral victory had led up to a drastic change in the relations between Capital and Labour in the world's greatest industrial community. American capital, highly organized for the purpose of keeping Labour in check, has now been constrained to agree that Labour shall organize itself in such a way that one control may be felt over all the ramifications of an industry. That is a great loosening of the grip which the strong had on the weak. Numbers are now closely marshalled against the marshalling of wealth. What is more, the workers' victory goes far to make the means by which they gained it appear legitimate. The decisive tactics were those of the "sit down strike," and if these are accepted as legal—or anyhow as not punishable by law—it follows that workmen have successfully claimed to control the instruments which they use in their work. Capitalists have paid for the machinery in a mill ; they have employed workmen to operate it. A quarrel arises about the conditions of employment, and organized Labour says : "no one else shall work the machines which we have been using." Up till now, it has been enough for Capital to say to the workmen : "we may lose money, but you will starve." But now it looks as if the whole machinery of production had become so interlocked that a stoppage anywhere means a stoppage

in half a dozen places, and the supply of things that have become necessities is blocked. Up till now, when that happened the Government was ready to insist that the strike should be broken. Now, it is very loath to eject workers from the benches that they have habitually sat on—even when they sit there doing nothing. In the last resort there is a suggestion that instead of replacing the employed, new employers may be found; and the capitalists recognize this menace. They know that the public refuses any longer to consider that a man owns his factory exactly as he owns his garden plot. They are not sure, even in the United States, that somebody else may not be put in to do the work of direction.

In France, where the idea was first developed, factory owners had to face the fact that a Socialist government was in power; and M. Blum could not be supposed to have any theoretic objection to nationalizing the instruments of production. Mr. Roosevelt is not avowedly a Socialist. Yet in the United States the resistance made by capitalists was less angry and less determined than in France where (as usual) the social experiment got its trial run. Labour across the Atlantic took shrewd notes of the results; and so presumably did the capitalists. Capital was very quickly convinced that it would not be allowed to employ gunmen to eject strikers, nor could it count on getting public forces to do this work unless the public were convinced that the strikers' action was sheer piracy. The experiment has gone a stage further in France. Workers gained shorter hours and in some cases a higher wage;

The Example of France

but a rise of prices has followed which diminishes the wage gain, and in some cases leaves the men poorer than before. Yet even so, two hours' more leisure in each working day is a blessed result—though not so blessed to those who are neither working men nor capitalists, and have to pay the higher prices. Still there is a chance that the competition between capitalists, which was checked by trusts, may start again. At all events, a deadlock has been broken; the claim to absolute ownership in the machinery of production has been successfully challenged. The next thing to be challenged will be the right of individual men to combine and withhold labour that is employed on a vital service. In fact, that challenge has been given, also in France,

when the Socialist Briand called out for military service the railwaymen who went on strike, and told them to run the trains. Such difficulties cannot arise in the countries where everybody lives virtually all the time under military discipline. But in the free nations, many accommodations have to be engineered so that the various freedoms can work together. Some years ago, before President Roosevelt came into power, it looked as if the free exercise of capitalist action might produce a revolution and possibly leave gangsters in charge of chaos. Today his extraordinary energy and the broad sense of vital justice which inspires it appear to have made North America "safe for democracy."

It is remarkable how widespread the results are where power is felt to be directed by justice. Looked at from the outside, it appears as if everyone in the United States had hitherto taken for granted the omnipotence of the long purse, which could always either get the law on its side, or defeat the law. Roosevelt has shaken that conviction ; it is no longer held even by the purse owners. As a side-result, the power of the United States is regarded throughout the rest of America with a confidence that was singularly (and not surprisingly) lacking. He may have brought about in the New World something like the edifice whose scaffolding America helped to build up in the Old—

**Outside
Europe**

and then knocked its supports away. Since that withdrawal, nothing that happens in America attracts a great deal of European interest or sympathy. President Roosevelt does not loom by any means so large on the European outlook as Herr Hitler or Signor Mussolini ; yet he probably matters more to the world. He has worked in conditions of freedom ; he has helped the people of his country to work out their own salvation. This is much less dramatic than the dictatorial method of bringing them all into a semi-military organization, strictly under orders from the centre. But it is more likely to yield lasting results.

India, again, is not much "in the news." Yet an experiment of colossal size is being tried there whose significance cannot be over-estimated. The West has been preaching democracy to the East and the East has been converted. China plunged,

with the American example before it as an ideal. Now, in the only other community comparable in size to **India and Ireland**: China, another plunge is to be taken, but not **The Difference** without guidance and control; and this time the ideal in view—for those Indians who will accept it—is not that of the United States, but of the British Commonwealth. Idealists hope, no doubt, that consequences will produce themselves as smoothly and as calculably as when a vast reservoir has been constructed and the waters are at last let flow to irrigate and fertilize innumerable fields by regulated channels. Yet since it is an experiment in democracy, one must assume that democracy will begin by making mistakes and will go on making them. They need not be fatal; unless all our education is misleading, humanity progresses only on condition of being allowed to make mistakes. Of course there are no limits to the possibility of wreckage, and Congress, having secured a general majority at the elections, may attach more importance to abolishing the name of control than to achieving practical results. Indians never forget the example of Ireland, and they will lay great stress on all that Mr. de Valera has achieved in that direction. They may, however, reflect that it is easy for them to convert the native Principalities into a vast Indian Ulster. They have a privilege which was not given to any Irish nationalist in power; they do not start with partition ready made; they have the chance to achieve unity. Some Indians also may remember that Cosgrave and Kevin O'Higgins, even while steadily advancing the reality of Ireland's independence, strengthened the bonds of common interest which linked them to Great Britain. These are so vital that Mr. de Valera, even when he forfeited Ireland's privileged position in the British market, could never bring himself to "cut the painter." Are they less vital to India?

We shall all watch with interest, Irishmen perhaps more than others. One thing is clear to me. If the Indian Government has to deal as equal to equal with the British Government, it will get a fair deal. Relations could not well be more envenomed than they were between England and Ireland when self-government started. Yet after five years' trial Mr. Blythe, not the most conciliatory person in the Cosgrave Government, testified em-

phatically that England had dealt frankly with them. Mr. de Valera's less happy experience suggests one reflection. If disputes arise, there should be power of referring them to such a tribunal as Mr. de Valera asked for—chosen from outside the British Commonwealth. Geneva might well be of service here for the smaller but more vitally connected League of Nations.

For the moment, not much is expected anywhere of Geneva. Yet Mr. Eden was able to point out with justice that great service had been rendered by its organization in the dispute between France and Turkey over that perplexing morsel of territory, the Sanjak of Alexandretta. For those nations which wish to have their controversies settled by discussion, the League provides a most useful go-between. In this case, the complainant, Turkey, was one of the defeated in the Great War. It is true that since 1918 Turkey has largely altered the position in which defeat left it, and has effected this by armed force. Yet the attitude of the great European Powers to Turkey over the question of the Dardanelles showed a frank willingness to alter by consent the arrangements which were imposed after the War. Protests came only from Germany and from Italy, the two Great Powers which appear to resent the League's existence. If one asks why they resent it, the answer can be only that both regard it as an obstacle to the free use of force for their own objects.

It is significant that in the Conference of the Scandinavian States and Holland, which was called to consider means of removing economic frontiers, opinions were expressed about the necessity to rehabilitate the League; and Dr. Colijn, a foremost spokesman, held that its function should be limited to pronouncing judgment. Evidently he had decided against the possibility of "providing the League with teeth." But he certainly knows that Great Britain and France would be incomparably more free to use the teeth which they possess to prevent or to undo an act of aggression if this pacific tribunal had pronounced that there was justification for armed intervention.

On the whole, opinion in the English-speaking countries appears to be turning towards this conception of the League's function. Those who accept it—as probably Lord Lothian

would—ought to accept the necessity for arrangements made in advance by individual States to meet any probable aggression.

**The Shadow
of Germany**

Yet any such arrangements are condemned by him and by others as aiming at "the encirclement of Germany." They invite the world to regard the pact between France and the Soviets as a menace to the peace of Europe. Presumably they accept also the German view that the pact, or alliance, between Czechoslovakia and Russia is a pistol pointed at the heart of Germany. But is Germany to monopolize the right of pointing pistols? When a nation arms so far beyond what is needed for the defence of its territory, and strains its economic resources for armament as Germany has done, inevitably its neighbours feel apprehensive. Even Switzerland had this feeling so notoriously that Herr Hitler gave a public undertaking that Switzerland should be left undisturbed—although it is clear that without the incorporation in the *Reich* of German-speaking Switzerland, the ideal set out in Herr Hitler's book cannot be realized. However, Switzerland has Herr Hitler's promise. So has France in regard to Alsace; so has Belgium. These assurances may (or may not) be regarded as firm guarantees; but the more Herr Hitler assures the world that he will not make use of his great military resources in the West, the more apprehensive his neighbours in the East must become. Poland does not show signs of disturbance; but Poland has re-knit the alliance with France. That presumably is part of the "encirclement." Yet does anybody, does even Lord Lothian, regard it as a danger to Europe or to Germany? There remain the other Eastern frontiers—Austria and Czechoslovakia. Austria has also received assurances, and has given the pledge that Austrians will regard themselves as German. But the cardinal fact here is that Germany could only annex Austria at the price of breaking with Italy—and most probably of letting loose a war in which there would be a real encirclement. So we come back to Czechoslovakia and I at least cannot but regard it as certain that, if that country had not the promised backing of Russia, its independence would be ended within the year. Surely, however, it is desirable that this outpost of European democracy should not rely solely on the support of Stalin's arbitrary government. Would it really

be better that the West, in order to avoid the appearance of "encirclement," should agree to leave Germany a free hand in the East? Which is more likely: that there will be war if Germany feels "encircled" and resents the feeling—or that it will come when Germany feels assured that, however she moves on her eastern flank, France will be passive?

To put it another way, does the Franco-Soviet pact tend to weaken or strengthen the Little Entente? Dr. Krofta, the Czechoslovakian Prime Minister, has recently made a speech declaring that he feels confident in the present situation. If the relations between France and Russia were altered by rescinding the Pact, that confidence would be rudely shaken.

There is great agreement that the danger zone of Europe lies in the Danubian countries. A book by Dr. Gerhard Schacher, called *Central Europe and the Western World*, has already been noticed in this Review, but I make no apology for returning to it. He is one of those Germans who do not find residence in their own country possible under Herr Hitler's rule; he had, in fact, the mentality which in England would have made him a pro-Boer. Like Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Lloyd George, he was capable of thinking that his country might be less just in dealing with other peoples; and at present, living in Prague, he adopts very fully the Czechoslovakian view. It is no disparagement to say of a man that he inclines to agree with Masaryk rather than with Hitler. But he had the German training, and with German thoroughness he details the work that has been done, on the initiative of Masaryk and Benesh, to consolidate into a stable framework the group of new States. Destroy Czechoslovakia, and you knock the whole fabric to pieces. What is graver, you bring Germany and Russia into direct contact. Yet with every disposition to regard Czechoslovakia as an asset of value to Europe, Dr. Schacher's statement of Czech views is disturbing; for he reiterates the claim that a restoration of the Habsburgs must be absolutely ruled out—and all the more ruled out if Austria wants it. This is certainly not a gospel of freedom; and it does not seem logical. Dr. Schacher holds (with Prague) that the *Anschluss* must be resisted at all costs in the interests of European peace. Why then bar a measure which, in German opinion, is the strongest

guarantee that Austria will preserve its separate existence ? It has to be remembered that Dr. Schacher wrote his book a year ago or more. The attitude of people in Prague may well have changed ; certainly such a complete negative is hard to reconcile with any reasonable spirit.

Such is the world in which, if rumour be true, Mr. Baldwin proposes to hand over his charge to Mr. Neville Chamberlain. Rumour also says that Mr. Baldwin looks like a schoolboy a week before the holidays ; and it is not hard to believe.

In addition to the complexities and dangers of Mr. Baldwin's Release the international situation, there is internal trouble caused by the proposal of vast expenditure. Such figures go to men's heads ; they intoxicate. It is so easy to say, when hundreds of millions are voted for armament, why grudge the paltry few millions that would be needed to abolish the means test ? Why not be lavish with outlay in the special areas to provide employment somehow for the unemployed ? (And a good many people feel uneasy about the contrast here.) Again, when all this money is being spent, why not give Parliament at large a discretion in the spending of it ? If works are set on foot in a Labour member's constituency, that is taken as inevitable ; but if the same happens when the Conservative holds the seat, there is outcry against corruption. In short, Labour is claiming for the individual member of Parliament those rights which the member of Parliament possesses in France as member of Parliament, but which in England are limited to members of the Government, representing the Crown. Anybody who studies French affairs even a little knows that this licence to the private member to propose expenditure is the worst cause of trouble in France. Yet there is dreadful temptation to make such accusations against the Government as are made already before the scheme is launched ; there is dreadful proneness to believe them when they are made. Mr. Baldwin is lucky to escape from a scene where there is war-time expenditure without the war-time mentality.

One must recognize that the Chancellor of the Exchequer finds the country facing enormous figures of expenditure without dismay ; and he can take credit for having created that confidence.

What is more, the announcement of British re-armament on that colossal scale has thrown cold water on the flames which threatened to spread from Spain, so that it looks as if that unhappy country will be left to fight out its own quarrel with its own bitter passion, and its own desperate valour.

But how it must puzzle foreigners, and especially the French, to observe that while a strongly Conservative Government holds power at Westminster with little serious challenge, across Westminster Bridge a Socialist County Council is given by the electors new lease of power to govern London. Everybody in France is always frightened of what Paris may do ; nobody in England worries about London. It is the least revolutionary capital in Europe. Socialism in Great Britain must be the despair of all good Marxists. It is so intolerably tolerant—and tolerated. But I suppose any country gets the Socialists—and the revolutionaries—that it deserves.

Revolutions are never wholly agreeable, and they come hardest on those who at the beginning were on top ; as, for instance, were the family of that famous character, Lord Morris of Killanin, about whom his daughter, Mrs. Wynne, has written her book : *An Irishman and his Family*. Un-

**A Mirror of
Pre-war Ireland**

doubtedly Ireland is not the same country that it was fifty years ago ; but a good many Irish people of Mrs. Wynne's social standing went through the same revolutionary period and did not take it so hard. The change was gradual. Fifty years ago the country was managed locally by the landlord class ; the local control was destroyed by a Local Government Act passed by English Tories. But as to central control, up till 1921 a succession of Englishmen or Scotsmen were sent over to govern Ireland ; and instinctively they deferred to the judgment of Michael Morris, who knew his countrymen inside out, and could put his knowledge into the most amusing form without sacrificing any of the weight that lay behind his convictions. Since those convictions were all in favour of maintaining the English system, he was all the more influential because he was a Catholic ; and so for half a century he had a great part in governing Ireland. Yet things did not go as he planned them ; and he was lucky to die before he saw what

would have looked to him like defeat and disaster. His children felt it. All of them adored the family home at Spiddal, on Galway Bay, among the Gaelic-speaking people of whom Mrs. Wynne has written so pleasantly ; and the Morris family were popular without measure there and in Galway ; so much so that till he succeeded his father in the peerage, Martin Morris sat as a Unionist for Galway city—the only naturally Nationalist seat ever won by a Unionist from Parnell's time onward. Yet in the end, during our troubles, people came over from the other side of the county and burnt that hospitable house. Lord Killanin, I believe, never set foot in Ireland again. His sister, living with her husband in a still more beautiful place on the shores of Lough Gill, found her household harried with raids for arms and the like, till they also turned their backs on it ; and all she has of Ireland now is her memory which furnishes this work with endless amusing stories and shrewd comment ; yet, as is natural, not with very balanced judgments. I suppose that Lord Morris was impartial on the bench ; everywhere else nobody could have had stronger prejudice against whatever was " nationalist." He resented " nationalism " all the more because nobody could be more Irish than he was, and he felt no need or use for " nationalism." Yet his daughter says that she does not believe he could ever have been really in complete sympathy of friendship with any Englishman. It is a queer contradiction, but intelligible enough.

All the same, those who have not left Ireland find the country places essentially unchanged. Dublin is changed ; there is no longer the Viceregal Court and the British Army and high judicial salaries to keep up the English standard of living. What remains is the Irish standard of talk and of sociability. Lord Morris, and even Father Healy of Bray, many of whose witty phrases are recalled in this book, could still find their match at Irish dinner tables. An American professor, in his book on *The Irish Countrymen*, provides the *obiter dictum* that " Dublin is the last refuge of the art of conversation."

THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

A GREAT LIBERAL

By LORD ESHER

GREY OF FALLODON, by G. M. Trevelyan. *Longmans*. 16s.

It would be an impertinence to comment upon Professor Trevelyan's achievement in the writing of this biography. No doubt he had special advantages in his personal knowledge of his subject and his natural sympathy with his fellow Northumbrian, but it is acknowledged that no man has a higher claim to be a master of historical method or could be more safely entrusted with the record of a noble life.

England is fortunate that in a world cluttered up with cleverness she can still produce men so simple and so high-minded as Lord Grey. Presumably England will continue to produce such men as long as the English people continue to admire them. Up till now it has been the type they have always preferred to be governed by, placing character high above brains in their estimation, preferring steady integrity to the glitter of meretricious dexterity.

Lord Grey was the pattern of this aristocratic type. Even as a schoolboy he displayed its essential characteristics, a determination to be himself and not to follow the herd either in his thoughts or his actions, a grave detachment which is the basis of personal independence. Yet at the same time he had no trace of priggishness, but loved his Winchester life with wholehearted enjoyment. At Balliol he was busily idle, even to the

extent of providing his biographer with the happy paradox of being "sent down" in 1884 and returning as Chancellor of the University in 1928. The young man who refused to be educated, however, had no reluctance to educate himself, and he acquired at Oxford a strong affection for music, poetry and art.

From early years he developed that love of the country and hatred of the towns which he retained through life. It was said of him: "Edward's fishing, as everything he did, was a model of good style, and his back-hand cast under the bushes was a joy to watch."

What higher compliment can the English pay! Yet tradition and duty brought him reluctantly into Parliament and up to the London that he hated. He never spoke in his first Parliament, though he afterwards acquired an effective method of speaking which, however carefully prepared, appeared as natural as conversation, the unvarnished candid expression of his opinion. In the turmoil and temptation of public life he never failed to resent the mean attack, the unfair misrepresentation, or to believe in the honesty of his opponents. Resolutely he did his work, though when office came to him he wrote to his wife:

"O great god Pan, that hatest London and hearest the voice of Under Secretaries when they cry unto thee, what wilt thou think of me?"

It is not surprising that the nobility of his character should have impressed

not only his countrymen but all the foreigners with whom he came in contact during his long tenure of the Foreign Office. Professor Trevelyan lays stress upon his steadfastness and moderation, and his associates in the Foreign Office felt that they were led by a man obviously incapable of any dishonourable action and whose judgment could never be deflected by any trace of personal ambition.

Except Mr. Lloyd George in his six volumes of concentrated egoism, no one has failed to observe the unmistakable qualities of greatness conspicuous in Lord Grey. The only doubtful point of his great career, that if he had told Germany we should take part in the war he would have prevented its outbreak, probably haunted the darkness of his later years. It is easy enough to make clever suggestions long after the event. But Grey was too great a democrat to pledge England behind her back, and it would have never entered his mind to have told the Cabinet that England ought to be so pledged, to have resigned if the Cabinet repudiated his advice, as, led by Mr. Lloyd George, they certainly would have done, and to have left the responsibility for the subsequent event upon his colleagues.

No doubt Lord Grey's great speech in the House of Commons on August 3, 1914, when he stood before the embattled world as the spokesman of England, was the most tragic moment of his life. He had the Liberal hatred of war, and his accumulated knowledge of European affairs enabled him to realize the magnitude of the event. But for Grey this tragedy did not stand alone. Few men have sustained such undeserved disaster. His first wife, the love of his early life, was killed in an accident. His second marriage lasted only six years. Two brothers, to whom he was devoted, met violent deaths. Both the houses which he loved were burnt to the ground, and

he himself, lover of birds and books, went blind. But his essential serenity survived the blows of fate and his character strengthened to bear them.

Grey had great gifts of statesmanship. He had a clear eye for the important issue, and his mind was unclouded by those petty jealousies and personal vanities which hamper the influence of most politicians. Also he understood the English whom he was trying to govern, knowing them to be essentially liberal in thought, and that :

"While they prized liberty above everything and would not tolerate the loss of liberty, they also had the conviction that order must be preserved in order that liberty may be enjoyed."

Only duty kept him in official life. He found his political work dull, even odiously uninteresting. Only duty kept him in London, and he had a low view of a civilization based upon large cities, with its gradual defilement of his beautiful countryside. To Grey the urban life was intolerable. He wrote to Lady Lytton :

"So you read *The Times* hungrily from cover to cover. You are so much more suited to be a Cabinet Minister than I am. . . . Some day when there is a storm and you are all hugging your houses and reading your *Timeses*, I shall take the road and be no more seen."

Professor Trevelyan's admirable biography shows us three things, the complete English aristocrat, the civilized country life, and the duty of *not* leading it.

BOOKS ON THE CORONATION

Reviewed in the May Issue

THE THIRD REPUBLIC

BY CLAUDESLEY BRERETON

FRANCE: A Companion to French Studies, edited by Professor R. L. Graeme Ritchie. *Methuen*. 16s.

THE DESTINY OF FRANCE, by Alexander Werth. *Hamish Hamilton*. 10s. 6d.

FOR the last twenty-five years, or even longer, England has been gradually becoming willy-nilly reintegrated in the Continent, from which it has so often broken away in the past. Take France for instance: we have to go back to the eighteenth century, so well described in Professor Ritchie's illuminating book, to find so close an understanding and reciprocal influence between the intelligentsia of France and England, beginning with Galsworthy and Kipling, and including James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Aldous Huxley on the one hand, and Proust, Gide, and that international "go-between," André Maurois, on the other. Further connective tissue is being formed by the ever-growing air services, not only between us and the countries opposite our coasts, but with those further afield, as distances, once vast, daily shrivel. In vain does each country claim to own the air above its territory. In time of war these upper regions will constitute a limitless no man's land stretching from Ireland to the Urals. But probably the clearest evidence that we are being steadily dragged back into the European vortex is the fact that, though we have not the slightest desire to fight anyone, we have been obliged to take a prominent part in the rearmament race.

And yet apart from a handful of politicians and publicists and our Foreign Office, working often in secret and unknown, which is fully aware how close we are to the European cauldron, the average Englishman still remains, if not an isolationist, more or less insular. He reads in his daily paper, after first glancing at the result of the last Test Match, of national upheavals, large-scale massacres, and civil wars, and then goes off unconcernedly to his work or his golf. Even if he is philanthropic enough to be interested in the League of Nations, Geneva often seems as remote to him as a mission station in South Africa. He has literally no conception of the awful sense of insecurity and alarm, so well described in Mr. Alexander Werth's book, which is characteristic of the normal life of the French, and indeed of the whole Continent today. Such notice as he takes of other nations is confined to utilising their different regimes for political propaganda. Russia, for instance, to a "die-hard" serves as an awful example, or to a "left-winger" as a convenient knout to belabour capitalists. The great bulk of the British people, apart from a few enthusiasts, have no desire to copy any nation. To anyone who knows France as (say) Mr. Alexander Werth knows it, it must seem incredible that the fact that the French working classes have at one swoop carried through an industrial revolution by the establishment of a forty-hour week with no reduction of wages, has not only failed to produce any serious repercussions over here, but has

been passed by almost unnoticed by the British workman. Most of us still remain fundamentally English in our ideas, our prejudices, and our outlook, with a contempt outspoken or implied for the foreigner. And yet there was never a time when it was more the bounden duty of everyone to try to study and understand our neighbours, and especially the French, because of all European countries France and England owe far more to each other's beneficent influence than any other two taken together. Again, they are not only the two closest to each other geographically, but they are the two chief democracies of the Western World whose civilization is built up on a passionate belief in liberty, however differently each may have evolved. Happily, the two books already quoted, which have just appeared, are admirably calculated to fill up in their way the vast gaps that exist in our knowledge of France. Professor Ritchie's book, which deals with the growth and development of modern France and its civilization, literature, history, institutions, art and politics, serves as an admirable prelude and interpretation of Mr. Alexander Werth's brilliant study of French politics from 1918 down to the present day, with special reference to the last four or five years. Did space allow, it would be interesting to compare Mr. Sisley Huddleston's masterly chapter in Professor Ritchie's symposium on the same period with Mr. Werth's more detailed story, and especially their estimates of some of the leading characters, Briand, Laval, and Blum; although these critics, occupying in each case a "left-centre" position, are on many points in substantial agreement. Perhaps to those who believe in the destiny of France it is very consoling to note that, in spite of the present alarms and incursions on the European stage, they neither of them "despair of the Republic," in the broad sense of the word.

In a comparatively short notice it is difficult to do full justice to either book. But one would signal out in Professor Ritchie's volume the incisive and lucid chapter on the country, people, and civilization, with its insistence that French civilization is neither racial nor even national, but is far older even than the idea of nationality; the brilliant chapters on French history and literature in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the very useful chapter on French literature in the twentieth century, and the equally useful articles on French architecture and painting, which taken all together, give an admirable picture of the French genius. As for Mr. Werth's vivid book, it could only have been written by an eye-witness on the spot. It is a masterpiece of clarity and well-balanced judgment, even when those with whom he is not in sympathy are concerned.

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J. H. THOMAS

By LORD ELTON

MY STORY, by The Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas. *Hutchinson*. 15s.

"THOMAS is a young agitator of whom no notice need be taken." Thus the Stationmaster of Swindon reported to the rulers of the G.W.R. in the nineties. It was an unfortunate prophecy. A great deal of notice, as it proved, had to be taken of J. H. Thomas. Also he was not an agitator. He possessed gifts, it is true, which might have made him a highly successful agitator. He could tickle and stir a mass meeting, he had his compatriot, Mr. Lloyd George's, uncanny gift for sensing the mood of a crowd, or a committee, and playing on it. Thomas might have become an agitator of the A. J. Cook variety, only far more successful. But his temperament did not permit it. Your successful agitator requires a vein of bitterness, a healthy capacity for hatred, even if it is only a system that he hates. Mr. Thomas has never been good at hating. Indeed if this autobiography possesses a moral, it is the author's constantly repeated conviction that virtue is not the monopoly of one class or one Party. Mr. Thomas has always possessed a simple human gusto, an enviable capacity for enjoying himself, and he finds it difficult not to like people. He recalls the thrill of staying at the Westminster Palace Hotel when, as a Swindon Town Councillor, he was sent to London to back a private Bill. "How different from those days when as a fireman on the railway . . . I used to cook my breakfast of ham and egg on a shovel in the fire of the racing engine." There speaks the true demo-

crat. One kind of snob would have forgotten by now that he had ever been a fireman. Another kind of snob would pretend that he still wished he had never been anything else. But Mr. Thomas—it has been the secret of his hold on the public imagination—has been that rarest of all social types, the man who is completely devoid of snobbery. The sort of snob who cannot bear an "h" to be dropped, and the sort of snob who says that the most moving spectacle in the Silver Jubilee procession was the road sweepers, both find Mr. Thomas difficult to put up with. But the instinct of the man in the street has always detected and admired a profound and genuine simplicity in his character. Mr. Thomas is proud of his rise, and does not conceal it. He has never lost touch with his earliest associates, yet, characteristically, in this autobiography there is none of the familiar sob-stuff about the hardships and humbleness of his origins. At nine he was earning four shillings a week as a chemist's errand boy—and that is literally all he tells us about them. Those familiar early hardships! How gloatingly the autobiographies of most Labour leaders dwell upon them! How well we know the Labour Member who never makes a speech on any other topic! But those who dwell upon them most are almost always either bitter or self-satisfied, or both. And Mr. Thomas is neither.

It is this sterling vein of simplicity in his character which has made Mr. Thomas so shrewd a man of affairs, and given him so ruthless an eye for un-

realities. He has always given the ideologue short shrift. And now as the panorama of his career passes in review in this book, one realizes anew what an immensely stabilizing influence he has exercised on a whole generation, and more, of Trade Unionists. No wonder that no Union has achieved such solid advances as the N.U.R. under his guidance. In crisis after crisis he chose a middle course—and justified his choice. He was never happy during a strike. His most cherished memory of the Railway Strike of 1920 is of the strikers playing football against the troops who had been drafted into South Wales—the “gate” going to the strikers’ funds. “A magnificent spirit” he calls this, which is precisely what A. J. Cook, the miners’ leader, would not have called it. The lesson he draws from the General Strike is equally frank :

The challenge to the public had been taken up. We all know now that England will never allow itself to be coerced : it is a lesson that must never be forgotten by any section of the community however powerful.

“We all know now.” But to anyone who reads between the lines of this narrative, it is obvious that Thomas knew it all along. He recognized from the first that the Strike must be a disaster. He stayed at his post because

I did not consider the Government’s attitude was right ; I felt satisfied that my duty was clearly to endeavour to make the best of what I then knew must be a bad job.

But his most vivid memory of those days is characteristically :

When the Strike came, the general public faced it with a courage that amazed the outside world. Many of the working-class had to take back the bitter things they had said about the pampered upper classes. Off came the black coats. Sleeves were rolled up. To hell with the idea of revolution ! These fellows—clerks, dandies, even tackled any sort of job ; they drove trains, piloted motor buses, and even unloaded ships in

harbour. That is how England tackled her first General Strike.

How easy for the ideologue to represent such words as a betrayal of the author’s class ! And yet how profoundly right Thomas’ verdict is ! “Off came the black coats”—undoubtedly in the judgment of history that will be the chief significance of the General Strike. But how rare for a strike leader to see steadily enough and whole enough to be able to perceive that truth, and that without ever ceasing to champion, and to champion most effectively, the material interests of the strikers. There must have been some refreshing passages of arms between Thomas and Cook, realist and ideologue, in those days. It is a pity that we are not given more of them in authentic *oratio recta*. Only one survives, but it is highly symptomatic. At Eccleston Square they were discussing how to save the strikers from starvation. A. J. Cook jumped up and said that the working-classes should have foreseen a strike and laid in secret supplies of food. His own mother-in-law had been taking in an extra tin of salmon for weeks past. There was a silence of stupefaction. Then J. H. Thomas—“By God ! A British revolution based on a tin of salmon !”

Such a man, and this is high praise, might be expected to take to the National Alliance like a duck to water. Once again, as in so many industrial disputes of the past, he was turning away from the wild talk and sketchy plans of the ideologues—their revolutions on a tin of salmon—to a system which would yield solid results for the classes he cares for most. He played an important part in an administration which has given the working classes more employment, higher purchasing power and fuller social services than any Government before it. And he will be content, if this book is any guide, to leave that as his justification.

SELF-PORTRAIT OF A REVOLUTIONARY

BY HAROLD LASKI

LETTERS OF LENIN, translated by Elizabeth Hill and Doris Mudie. *Chapman & Hall*. 15s.

THIS book is excellently translated, and it is indispensable to the understanding of Lenin. It illustrates every side of his character—some of them aspects until now only half-known to the general public. Lenin the devoted son ; Lenin capable of a deep, even agitated, tenderness for Krupskaya ; Lenin with hobbies like shooting, in which he can take an immense pleasure ; it is good to have these glimpses of the great revolutionary as it were in undress uniform.

But, quite rightly, the bulk of the letters deal with that revolution which was the supreme object of Lenin's life. From that angle, their interest is almost as great as their importance. They are remarkable proof of his powers of concentration ; every one of them is will incarnate. They are not, be it said, the letters of the fanatic that Lenin has been often represented to be. No fanatic would be capable of the eager and sustained argument these letters continually reveal. They show rather the man whose life has been unified by devotion to a central idea, who makes that idea wind itself in and out of every experience he encounters. More : they reveal a power that can only be described as extraordinary to mould his experience to the service of his idea. They are the letters of a fighter who gives no quarter. They reveal the born organizer with an ability rarely paralleled to arrange detail in terms of a central informing principle. There is not an atom of rhetoric about

them ; there are even few sentences, if any, one would seek to remember. Letter-writing to Lenin is not an art. He is thinking, every time he takes up his pen, of an object to be attained, an instruction to be given, an argument to be driven home. Their very blunt directness is significant of the man. He plunges invariably into the heart of his matter, without decoration or circumlocution. Taken together, they are a self-portrait we could not spare. They cast a light upon the dynamics of the Russian revolutionary movement, and upon many of its main leaders as these were seen through the microscope of Lenin's personality which is of extraordinary interest.

Some of these characteristics explain, as few things explain, the extraordinary ascendancy he established over his colleagues after the October Revolution. He will have no half-heartedness, even from the most cherished of companions. He is quick to see the slightest yielding of principle. He never loses heart ; he sees always the certain triumph of the end in which he has faith, whatever may be the temporary difficulties of the road. He has his ear always to the ground ; an arrest here, a strike there, he is always eager to see them in the context of their general significance. He is avid of information. He is untiring in his energy, and he never wastes time. I can see no trace of egotism in nearly five hundred pages of correspondence. The man is living in his cause. He is, too, intensely human in personal relations, even though he can be ruthless in cutting himself off

from those who do not travel his road. Now and again one sees that a special note creeps in. His differences with Plekhanov never veil the fact that the pioneer of Marxism in Russia has a peculiar claim. His letters to Gorki have always a quite individual note of affection.

The English reader will, I think, find the letters after 1914 of quite special interest. They reveal a Lenin who saw at once that his own hour had struck and who awaited impatiently the chance to take advantage of it. Those written before his return to Russia in the spring of 1914 show clearly how much more realistically he had seized the meaning of the war than any other European Socialist; here, as almost nowhere else, we can grasp the impact of those long years of passionate preparation for the supreme moment. And after his return to the Soviet Union, the letters are of still higher interest.

On some of the administrative problems of the Revolution there are documents here which, for their incisive grasp of the essentials of a situation, rank with the best of the Peel Papers and deserve the closest attention from students. They show how the statesman's perspective is born of the ability to make minute facts pick out the contours of a general solution.

Miss Hill and Miss Mudie have given us here some 340 letters and telegrams of the thousand or so that are in existence. Their editorial work has been well and concisely done, and it is greatly to be hoped that this volume will be followed by others.

Whatever our view of Lenin, we cannot know him too intimately, for, on any showing, he is one of the half-dozen seminal figures of the modern world. It may be said with confidence that no one can pretend to have understood Lenin who has not read this remarkable correspondence.

SWINNERTON. An Autobiography
by Frank Swinnerton. *Hutchinson*
10s. 6d.

MIDNIGHT ON THE DESERT. A Chapter of Autobiography, by J. B. Priestley. *Heinemann*. 8s. 6d.

THE demand for the autobiographies and reminiscences of contemporaries persists. Only a few days ago an American friend rang me up to ask if I could give him particulars of the best of these "personality" and "personality-travel" books issued during the current publishing season. Racking my brains for titles I found it easy to think of a dozen, interesting, informative, and reasonably well written—and that was before the publication of either *Swinnerton* or *Midnight on the Desert*, two of the most important and delightful essays in autobiography to have appeared this year.

To Mr. Swinnerton, as the elder, I give pride of place. Here is a writer, who was apprenticed to a publisher when he was sixteen, and has ardently pursued this difficult trade ever since. One cannot imagine that he could be happy for long away from book production and authors. As a novelist he usually approaches his characters with proper respect. When he writes about himself, his friendships and acquaintanceships, he bubbles over with pleasure at being alive and in thankfulness for the charming and eccentric people who tread the literary walk of life with him. Most people who had the experience of working for J. M. Dent found it almost too much for them. Mr. Swinnerton in his teens stood up to the formidable old gentleman with such favourable results that he was treated afterwards as a human being. Mr. Swinnerton's eccentricities are very well and amusingly done, but with the touch of exaggeration that one expects from an exceptionally accomplished mimic. The portraits of his intimates are the best things in the book. Pre-eminent among them is the study of Arnold Bennett.

Nothing as good has been written about him. *Swinnerton* abounds in new and engaging anecdotes about men and women of letters. One felt that the author was less happily inspired when he depicted the distinguished publicists and politicians of the Reform Club, and there is a suspicion that the last few chapters were written in a hurry. This is the slight criticism one has to make of a lively and enthralling book.

Midnight On the Desert is enthralling, too. Mr. Priestley is in his happiest vein when he is writing about himself and is not fettered by the demands of fiction. His early essays on life and letters and his *English Journey* are the best things that he has done hitherto. This new "chapter of autobiography" is worthy to be ranked with them.

At the end of his stay on a ranch in Arizona, Mr. Priestley went out at midnight to the hut where he had been working, and, in the silence of the night, broken only by a freight train clanking down the valley, he settled down to destroy some unwanted pages of manuscript, but there was no hurry, and in the meantime, Mr. Priestley lit a pipe and reflected. His very pertinent reflections on life and travel, interviews and broadcasting, Mr. Bernard Shaw and the Grand Canyon, New York and London, Symphony Concerts at the Queen's Hall and film production in Hollywood, carried me along until I found that I had read the book at a sitting.

There is something peculiarly disarming about Mr. Priestley in the mood of the confessional. He is at his best, even-tempered, modest, confiding, and fully alive to the mysteries of an existence. "Our life is a mystery," he writes, "and it is significant that those cocksure facile reasoners who assure us that it is nothing of the kind can only return a blank stare to every fundamental question we ask about it."

Midnight on the Desert is exceptionally interesting because it marks another stage of development in its author's career. There is a mellowness in the thought and in the writing that shows no lack of interest in the never-ending problems which beset the human scene, there is rather an added poise and thoughtfulness in Mr. Priestley's determination to face these difficulties with confidence and without illusion, a determination which bodes well for the temper and tone of his future writing.

ERIC GILLET.

THE ROAD TO WIGAN PIER, by George Orwell. *Gollancz*. 10s. 6d.

THE first half of this thought-provoking book describes what the author saw in the coal areas of Lancashire and Yorkshire. For some months he lived entirely in coal miners' houses. "I ate my meals with the family," he writes, "I washed at the kitchen sink, I shared bedrooms with miners, drank beer with them, played darts with them, talked with them by the hour together." He went down a mine and spent an hour of agony, crawling to the coal face. He got to know exact details of average working-class budgets; and witnessed the result of mass unemployment at its worst and the cruel effect of the Means Test in breaking up families. He examined, and gives a minute description of, every kind of working-class dwelling, from the horrifying and disgraceful caravan settlements, at Wigan and elsewhere, to the "Council" houses which are, all too slowly, being erected to replace them. This section is illustrated with thirty-two photographs of slums, which are calculated to shock even the most complacent.

The second half is partly autobiographical. In it the author explains his attitude on the "terribly difficult issue of class" and his views on Socialism and Socialists. He was born in the

"lower-upper-middle-class," educated, with the help of a scholarship, at an expensive public school and afterwards spent five years as a police officer in Burma. When he came home on leave in 1927, he decided he could not go back to be part of that "evil despotism." He wanted to submerge himself, "to get right among the oppressed, to be one of them and on their side against their tyrants." But he soon discovered that class barriers cannot be broken down in a hurry, and that if you advance too eagerly to embrace your proletarian brother he may not like it. The impoverished "gentleman" and the working man, under present conditions, are as far apart in their habits and ways of thinking as if they belonged to different races. But that is no reason, since their economic interests are identical, why they should not co-operate for political ends. "When the widely separate classes who, necessarily, would form any real Socialist party have fought side by side," says Mr. Orwell, "they may feel quite differently about one another." But there is a danger that the "private schoolmaster, the half-starved free-lance journalist, the Colonel's spinster daughter with £75 a year, the jobless Cambridge graduate" and all the rest of the sinking middle class, may be so repelled by Socialism, in the form in which it is now presented, that they will accept the Fascist alternative. "The ordinary decent man, who is in sympathy with the *essential* aims of Socialism," the author observes, "is given the impression that there is no room for his kind in any Socialist party that means business." It is certainly as true as it is unfortunate that the words "Socialism" and "Communism" seem to "draw towards them with magnetic force every fruit-juice-drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex maniac, Quaker, 'nature-cure' quack, pacifist and feminist in England. . . . These people come flocking towards the smell

of 'progress' like blue bottles to a dead cat." Mr. Orwell also delivers a well-aimed thwack at "the astute young social-literary climbers who are Communists now, as they will be Fascists five years hence, because it is all the go."

This brilliant, disturbing book should be read and pondered over by every jobless wearer of an old school tie. Socialists who are puzzled to understand why their party has been steadily losing ground, during the past ten years, should read it also.

DOUGLAS GOLDRING.

NEW ZEALAND FROM WITHIN, by Donald Cowie. *Routledge*. 10s. 6d.

WHEN one comes to the calm of middle-age, one recollects oneself at twenty with a certain amount of horror. The enthusiasms which urged one to write seem to be no more than wild prejudices. It was impossible, in the confusion of growing, to see the difference between courage and good manners in writing. Any conscientious writer has only to turn back to his early manuscripts to realise this flaw in his work. One is equally intolerant with other young writers, and it is perhaps unfair to place the eager, youthful books of beginners into the hands of older reviewers. This is my thought upon reading *New Zealand from Within*. It left me so angry that I walked into the fields and tried to forget it.

When Mr. Cowie describes the landscape of New Zealand, he writes with sensibility and calm, but when he wrestles with the problems of the New Zealanders themselves, he distorts simplicity, young development, and harmless social foibles with his own fierce prejudices. Let us examine one statement. According to Mr. Cowie, New Zealand women are "not conspicuous for breadth of mind," and he is afraid that his "rudeness" to them will cause them to say "so many misleading things about his book that their menfolk may

use to read it at all." He writes that "it would be a great pity for New Zealand," and adds a little derision because these good women read Edgar Wallace, Beverley Nichols, and J. M. G. Le Clez. Does Mr. Cowie wish for a nation in which all the women read Voltaire and Voltaire?

The Americans have invented a good word which rings with meaning. It is *snobbery*. There is no more pernicious word in the world than among the intellectual and highly informed young to wish everybody else to dote upon the æsthetic and become tipsy upon the arts. There is as much fine feeling and good thinking involved in growing a field of wheat as there is in writing a sonnet, and it is wrong to expect the young men of new countries to leap to culture. People who write and paint, or who compose music are often too narrow in their view, expecting the rest of the world to pause in its labour to read their books, gaze at their pictures and listen to their symphonies. The life of a community should be a balanced affair, with a healthy proportion of readers of Edgar Wallace to balance the minority which reads Proust.

Mr. Cowie loosens his anger against New Zealand newspapers. "If you want to write for a living in New Zealand you had better take a dose of strychnine and swallow it over quickly." This keen arrow of wit is badly aimed. Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand, is about the size of Norwich, and one cannot believe that any free lance writer would live in that city without turning to conquer Fleet Street. If Samuel Butler could care about his experiences in Canterbury enough to write *Erewhon* and the experiences of Katherine Mansfield's childhood in New Zealand were so biting and deep enough to give her the material for so many of her stories, I see no need to think ill of the country as one's first experience in a writer's development.

It is upon the questions of manufacture, farming, and civics that Mr. Cowie is most interesting and illuminating. "New Zealand will have to remain a farming country until such time as she has a population to become something worse," he writes. "New Zealand may not afford great industrial towns, belching chimneys, and festering slums until such time as she has multiplied her present population by at least ten." The warning in this is frightening. It is true that New Zealand is losing its colonial charm. When it forsook the good word colony for the more pompous dominion, it began to lose also the vitality and natural tastes of its early settlers and to take on the trappings of the twentieth century. It is beset by cinemas, motor cars, literary societies, lunching clubs, and many of the tit-bits of American life. But aren't we all? Mr. Cowie must not go into mourning for New Zealand alone. He must weep for the world.

HECTOR BOLITHO.

GREEN LAURELS: The Lives and Achievements of the Great Naturalists, by Donald Culross Peattie. Harpax. 12s. 6d.

EMERSON once said of Hawthorne as an author that he invited his readers too much into the study. It was, he protested, "as if the confectioner should say to his customers, 'Now let us make the cake'." That, it is true, was more than ninety years ago, and times have changed since and traditions loosened, but some readers at least will echo the older sentiment as they turn from one to another of Mr. Peattie's biographical portraits and presentations of the developing ideas of his greater and lesser naturalists. He begins at once: "They have given me a desk in a great scientific library," and thereafter one is repeatedly informed that it has stopped snowing outside, that the sun is shining, that it is

Sunday and Mr. Peattie has taken a walk; that it is May, that it is summer, and he is sitting in the fields with his notebook; that he would really like to have written quite a different book but it is now too late to go back and start again.

This might not really matter were it not symptomatic of what seems to be a distrust in Mr. Peattie himself of his power to make his subjects interesting in themselves, the result being an apparent compulsion not only to thrust himself upon the scene, but to ginger up, or anyway tuppence-colour, his accounts by the addition of febrile slapdash romantic detail. If a king's mistress incidentally appears it must be "pouting"; of Linnæus and his wife we are told that "if she was a one-man lily, he was a one-woman man." The chapter on Charles Darwin opens with five pages of fancy description ("imagine some planet, before man came upon it, called it home," etc.) of what turns out to be the Galapagos Islands—not irrelevant, but disproportionate when Darwin and Wallace between them get but forty-five pages in all.

Even so, one would not mind so much were the "facts" always accurate when one came to them. But here again Mr. Peattie must set drama first, compressing events and motives to a pattern of his own. He says that Darwin wished to be a doctor—the evidence is that he set out to study medicine, as later to become a clergyman, in sufferance of his father's over-riding wish. He says that Darwin lost interest in theology because he found there "nothing further to argue or discover"—a quite imaginary distortion of the truth. His speculation on why Lyell or Owen did not take Darwin's place on the *Beagle* wholly ignores the commonly known facts of the case, and later references to the development of Darwin's special views equally completely disregard essential chronology.

Does it seem over-severe to stress

these things at some length? They are all, taken one by one, trifles. Mr. Peattie's book was very well received in America, by both press and public. People over here will doubtless read it, and, on the whole, like it. It will tell them things they probably didn't know before about the lives and views and personalities of perhaps a score of naturalists, beginning, after a quick glance backward to Plato and Aristotle, with the Schoolmen and herbalists of the Middle Ages, pausing briefly upon the first microscopists, then plunging into the full stream flowing towards modern thought with Buffon, Réaumur, Linnæus, Lamarck and Cuvier. Half-a-dozen Americans make a less familiar interlude—Bartram, Audubon and others—then we are back to Goethe, Darwin, Wallace and, to finish, Fabre, "the type and model of a modern field naturalist."

A pleasant book, nicely illustrated, but journalism, not literature or scholarship, though, one feels, a little more care, a little more faith, might have made it both.

GEOFFREY WEST.

THE SHADOW ACROSS THE PAGE

by G. W. Stonier. Cresset Press 5s.

It is difficult to define this little book. It is not a collection of aphorisms, for Mr. Stonier is dead set against dogmatism even when chopped up into *bons mots*. Yet there is often something more than mere impressionism in his sayings. They remind me of the dissociated and mood-engendered dicta of the Russian Rosanov. Fancy is filled out with a sub-significance of thought, and a witty observation is made to convey a touch of emotional pathos. "As some people are attracted by haunted houses, I go to haunted men." That is an example of the latter process, and it shows the author in a mood so characteristic that one leaves him finally and takes away the image

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him as a man with considerable spiritual curiosity. His interest is first and last in other human beings and their whimsies and oddities. He dislikes them in their more heroic moments, and always suspects a person who is making a sustained effort. He has the sour grape attitude toward large endeavour, and even throws a doubt on the authenticity of personal identity.

"Even reading a poem I enjoy, there is something missing."

"Oh, what?"

"Myself."

This attitude leads to a sense of dissociation of mood and idea, and one would write off Mr. Stonier as an anarchist *manqué*, did he not attract one by the delicacy of his intuitions and his quick vision. He is, after all, an artist, and one who would perhaps have been approved by the late T. E. Hulme and the *Imagiste* School. He is explicit about his detestation of professional writing and the necessary padding out which must support structure in a book. "The only literary sin of any importance is to dilute one's originality. And that dilution, in some graceful and accepted form, is the aim of nine hundred writers out of a thousand."

It is obvious that his gods lie in France. It is also obvious that his detestation of "roughage" in a literary diet leads him to a kind of dyspepsia that robs him of vitality and makes him shrink from sustained effort either at self-revelation or at the creation of an objective world of his own. "Once I was afraid of a blank sheet of paper," he says. "It was like facing an eternity on which the minutes had to be inscribed." This miniature outlook circumscribes his sympathies, and tends to make them too small or too exquisite to be human. But it also gives him a quick and impressionable sensitiveness which is perfectly expressed in these conversational jottings.

RICHARD CHURCH.

JUAN IN CHINA, by Eric Linklater.
Cape. 7s. 6d.

I WOULD BE PRIVATE, by R. Macaulay.
Collins. 7s. 6d.

ABSALOM, ABSALOM! by William Faulkner.
Chatto & Windus. 8s. 6d.

A PENNY FOR THE POOR,
Bertolt Brecht.
Hale. 7s. 6d.

THE first two of these novels have been pleasant company on snowbound railway journeys, but I doubt if I shall get around to reading them again. The third defeated me in compartment and dining car, but now goes up on my favourite shelf. The fourth necessitated an effort of will which in this particular will not be repeated. Such categories may appear frivolous, but something of the kind is necessary if a reviewer is to do justice to a mixed bag while maintaining even an elastic standard.

Mr. Linklater's *Juan* is provided with the Chinese with fewer opportunities for his egregious frolics than he found in America. In the first place he practically confines his activities to the heavily diluted area of Shanghai, so that he misses the kaleidoscopic variety of scene and custom that gave a particular quality to his previous adventures. In the second place he is menaced by an already respectable corpus of jests upon the oriental theme. *Juan* must be original or perish, and to the student of fiction China seems peopled with stock figures who can be funny in only three ways: by misusing English, by smiling broadly in the presence of calamity and by coinining rarefied proverbs. To do him justice, Mr. Linklater for the most part avoids the pitfalls of the obvious, but only by avoiding the Chinese. His most engaging character is an Englishman, Flanders of Gargantuan girth and speech and with a talent for flatulence that would have been honoured on the Island of Ruan. The gangster Rocco (whom *Juan* has met in America), a journalist, an English couple with mercenary passions for ponies and antiques, and an ubiquitous

Japanese entrepreneur further weight the balance against the native element, while the Siamese twins who afford our something novel in the art of wooing could have been equally at home in the previous volume of his history. There are moments, too, when Juan's admiration and essential detachment from the popular enthusiasms is endangered by an idiotic sympathy for China in her struggle against Japanese expansion, for the central topic of the book is the attack on Shanghai. But with all these reservations the book provides at intervals sufficient echoes of *Juan in America* to ensure that it shall be read.

The arrival of quintuplets in a humble family is the pretext of Miss Macaulay's novel; pretext, not theme, for the matter seems to have shrunk from the exploitation of so notable and so social an event. Three pages from the novel, when the vicar on a Caribbean island discusses his theology to include a Quinary, give a glimpse of what Miss Macaulay's particular kind of irony might have made of the subject. But little humour at the expense of æsthetic under-graduates and other notable patients detains her, and though the novel provides a good dish of her favourite ingredients tropical—travel with a touch of cavalier lyricism—one is left with the feeling that, once they were known, the McBrown quintuplets were as some a responsibility to the author as any would be to most parents. In the case of the police-n father of the prodigious clutch, she provides a delicious character who carries the book on his sturdy shoulders through the most treacherous places.

Such books as Miss Macaulay's and Linklater's can be read while the neighbours' wireless is going full blast. That of Mr. Faulkner is a more solid work, but one entirely worth the understanding. Those who already know the Faulkner country will be glad to find a book of it, containing references to his

previous books, at the end of this one, which is again highly coloured by those problems of mixed blood which no chronicler of the Southern States of the U.S.A. can neglect. None better than Mr. Faulkner can convince an English reader of the inward reality of those problems, and those who have been brought up to regard Lincoln's freeing of the slaves as the only and admirable issue of the Civil War can still enjoy—perhaps better than others—the strange chivalry of Mr. Faulkner's attitude. The plot is a familiar one. To abstract it would serve no purpose, for the manner of its unfolding is three-parts of the value of the book. Mr. Faulkner eschews the easy and familiar sequence of such a tale as inconsistent with the mental processes of collecting and remembering it. By boring towards his centre from several points he not only defeats the tyranny of time but elaborates to a pitch of intense excitement each issue of his theme. His prose, a practised blend of colloquialism and something that at times approaches gongorism, is subtly rhythmical.

The *Dreigroschenoper* of Bertolt Brecht, modernised from the theme of *The Beggars' Opera*, was performed with great success in Germany and made into a film which we in England were not permitted to see. Perhaps to compensate us for this disability it has been produced in novel form under the title of *A Penny for the Poor*. The names of Peachum and Macheath strike a familiar note not altogether to the advantage of the book, which can scarcely bear such comparisons as might be made with Gay's lively libretto. It is a tale of unblushing roguery in an indeterminate London supposedly belonging to the time of the Boer War. The plot is intricate and tedious, the atmosphere too deliberately cynical. But it may contain something for the student of crime, if not of fiction.

FRANCIS WATSON.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

The article by **J. A. Spender**, so characteristic of his political philosophy, is one of a series of studies in present-day politics not yet published.

H. V. Hodson, whom we welcome to our pages this month, is admirably equipped to handle a subject which will be of the first importance at the Imperial Conference in May. Before succeeding to the editorship of *The Round Table* in 1934 he made an extensive tour of the Dominions on its behalf, and his frequent broadcasts on the Empire wavelength have marked him out as the outstanding figure of the younger generation concerned with Britain's Imperial problems. A Fellow of All Souls, Oxford, he was for a time on the staff of *The Economist* and subsequently of the Economic Advisory Council. He is part-author of a book entitled *The Empire in the World*—with Sir Arthur Willert and B. K. Long, also contributors to THE FORTNIGHTLY—which has just been published.

"Malaga and After" is the fruits of a journey undertaken in the early part of this year on a motor cycle through the territory under the control of the Spanish Government. The author, **Charles Duff**, has a reputation for his intimate knowledge of Iberian questions. He was a contributor to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* on Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries and for some years has been literary correspondent of *La Prensa* of Buenos Aires. From 1919 until last year he served in the News Department of the Foreign Office.

At the present juncture only a superficial student of Indian affairs could write of the outlook there with assured confidence. **Lord Meston** surveys the

situation with the caution and profound knowledge that come of a lifetime given to that country. He entered the Service over fifty years ago, rose quickly to office, and was from 1912 to 1919 Governor of the United Provinces. A man of liberal mind and ripe experience, he enjoyed the invaluable experience at the close of his career in the Service of being Finance Member of the Governor-General's Council.

Flora C. Twort is a painter, who writes occasional articles on light themes which reveal a charming and individual talent.

W. A. Newman is Assistant Editor of the *Irish Times*, and has naturally studied very closely the subject of Anglo-Irish relations.

Alexander Werth is an authority on contemporary France, and Paris correspondent of a leading British daily. His books include *France in Ferment* (1933) and the newly published *Destiny of France*, which is reviewed in this issue.

Dr. G. J. Renier, born in Flushing, settled in London in 1913 and is a Ph.D. of London University. He is well known by his book *The English, Are They Human?* and has published historical works on Anglo-Dutch relations. He is Reader in Dutch History and Institutions in the University of London.

G. W. Stonier is on the editorial staff of the *New Statesman* and reviews for THE FORTNIGHTLY (one of his books noticed in this issue). Last year he translated Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet*.

George Glasgow, **Robert Bell** and **L. F. Easterbrook** are more or less regular contributors.